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SOME
DOCUMENTS
ON THE DEMAND FOR
THE SIKH-HOMELAND

(Basic speeches, writings and press interviews by Sirdar Kapur Singh M.A., (Pb). M.A., (Cantab), formerly of the Indian Civil Service, ex-member Parliament, M.L.A. (Punjab) and some other documents)

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10 Sirdar Gian Singh.
With Compliments from.

Gurhaan Singh 10/1/71

FOREWORD

20/8/71

This book was originally intended to serve as a source book for the serious students of Sikh politics and at the same time was meant to be used by the sikh young men and women, for whom more than any body else, it is essential to be conversant with the destiny of the Khalsa. Due to some serious errors about exact form of its publication, it was regarded to have become unfit to serve the original purpose, for the fulfilment of which another edition of it shall soon be brought out. It is mainly in pursuit of its second, but by no means secondary, purpose that the book is being brought out in its present form. It will serve as an authentic guide to the basic trends of Sikh politics. Very appropriately, it is to the Young Khalsa or the Bhujangi Khalsa the cosmic-oiled representative power, of the Rider of the Blue Steed that this book is mainly addressed, for in the young hearts alone can that fire of passionate longing for Dharma be kindled on the flame of which the raw material for the Sikh Homeland shall be smelted. It is on the anvil of their determination and to the beat of their dedicated hearts that the different parts of the Sikh Homeland structure shall be forged. Practical idealism can warm young breasts only. And it is on the authority of Guru Gobind Singh that all this is stated. 'When the Britishers quit India'. He said, 'the young Khalsa shall arise to keep its tryst with Destiny.'

Here in the Foreword, I wish to present very simply the substance which is elaborated in the body of this book. Of course it is by no means a substitute for the original. The dynamism of the thought, the obvious intellectual honesty, the transparent logic, the forceful style, the inspiring ringing tones of the

original are too wonderful to be substituted. The young reader who wishes to bask in the sunshine of its brilliance and to elevate his mind in the process, must go to the book itself. The foreword will make it easier for him to digest its contents by providing broad guide-lines for his study.

By way of a personal explanation, I may say that I offer no apology for using the author's own words profusely, for to say the same thing differently is possible but there is perhaps no better way of saying it than the original way.

* * * * *

The idea of the Sikh Homeland is, without doubt an idea which is bound to have long term repercussions on the destiny of the Sikhs of India and of Asia. According to the orthodox Sikh way of thinking it is not legitimate to ask whether it is a religious or a political idea, for no such dichotomy between the religious and the political exists therein. Life to a Sikh is an integrated whole and its rules are laid down by the **Guru** who unites and synthesizes rather than divides and tears apart.' (ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਐਸਾ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਭਸੇ ਦੇਇ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਜੀਤਿ) The best thing to do is to examine its various aspects and to arrive at some understanding of its essential nature.

The legal aspect of the Sikh Homeland demand is embodied in the well known 'Sikh Homeland Resolution' of the Akali Dal, passed by its Working Committee on July 20, 1966, at Delhi. The relevant portion of it runs as follows : 'Sikhs demand that the following steps should be taken forthwith by the rulers of India to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the Union of India, namely, First, the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new Punjab to be set up, namely, the areas of Gurdaspur District including Dalhousie, Ambala District including Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Saddar, the entire Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, the areas of

Nalagarh, called Desh, the Tehsil of Sirsa, the Sub-Tehsil of Tohana and Guhla, and Rattia Block of District Hissar, Shahbad block of District Karnal, and contiguous portions of the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, must now be immediately included in the new proposed Punjab so as to bring contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit ; to be the Sikh Homeland ; within the Union of India.

And Second, such a new Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir as was envisaged in the Constitution Act of India in the year 1950. This along with the following portion of the resolution adopted by the open Session of the All-India Akali Conference, held at Ludhiana on December 11, 1956, ' . . . suitable constitutional and political measures should be adopted, in relation to the other states of the Union of India, such as, provisions of deterrent punishments for those found guilty of discrimination and prejudicial acts against Sikhs residing in these states, including statutory reserved appointments of adequate number of Sikhs as judges, legislators, policemen and executive officials concerned with the administering of justice and making laws and policies.' This is the legal content of the demand for the Sikh Homeland and the legal is rarely profound or edifying.

What is exactly demanded is that an autonomous area may be demarcated wherein the Sikhs may be able to live in accordance with their Nature, that is, in conformity with the ideas of worthy living as conceived by their Gurus. These being grounded in the triad of Sikh commandments of Gurm Nanak, *kirat karo, nam japo, wand Chhako*, meaning that in relation to Society, man must work honestly and share the fruits of his labour with others, and in his relation to Reality, he must cultivate communion with the Essence of things. Coupled with this is the trifacial doctrine of Gurm Gobind Singh laying down that (a) individual is the true source of all power, (b) he is an end-in-

himself and must never be enslaved or expended by others, and (c) prosperity and happiness, in ever-increasing measures, is the birth-right and destiny of mankind, 'A mind acquainted with the gems of thought crystalised in the East and the West, after centuries of pondering over the state of man on this planet, will recognize the essence of most of them in the Sikh ideals outlined here. In the Sikh Homeland these shall form the basis of the entire working of the political, social and economic institutions.

The Sikhs particularly will be gainers for they shall secure recognition for being 'approached and dealt with at the state level as a collective group and an entity.' Government by arbitrary will shall cease and the people will be governed impersonally or by the rule of law. The facts of the Sikh history, the customs and traditions of the Sikhs will be duly respected in the Sikh Homeland. In such a state alone can the atmosphere, conducive to the prevalence of the cherished Sikh theory of 'Double Sovereignty' be created. The essence of this theory is very similar to substance of the theory of Pluralism.

To make the pen-picture of the Sikh Homeland fairly comprehensive, it only remains to be said that in it to be a Sikh shall be a matter of pride, but at the same time all citizens without any distinction whatever shall be co-sharers in the rights and privileges which accrue from it. Even this is superfluous assertion because it is well known that a Sikh, as a matter of faith, recognizes no one as an alien. (ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਾਹਿ ਬੇਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਬਣ ਆਈ).

A consideration must now be given to the nomenclature and the boundary of the Sikh Homeland wherein all these dreams shall be realized and wherein the dignity of the individual shall be inviolable. The name owes its origin to Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh the grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the then vice-regent of the Sikh Empire. He used it while corresponding, on behalf of Sarkar-i-Khalsa, with Dost

Muhammad Khan the king of Kabul. He referred to the lands stretching from the Jamuna to Oxus beyond Ghazni as being the historic Homeland of the Sikhs. (Did the Kanwar regard the Sikhs as being the legitimate political successors of the Kushanas ?) That is the ideal Sikh Homeland. At present, however, the Sikhs demand no more than the areas outlined in the famous resolution of the Akali Dal to which reference has already been made. The nomenclature and the territorial claims are thus associated with the aspirations of the Sikhs when they were at the apex of their political power.

The next consideration must be of the arguments which make the demand for the Sikh Homeland valid.

The demand for the Sikh Homeland has five-fold validity. First of all it is implied in the original doctrine of the Order of the Khalsa. 'A Sikh who takes the baptismal vow of the Khalsa must, thenceforth, refuse to accept the status reserved for a subject. A member of the Khalsa is a sovereign citizen by his birth-right, and subjugation and slavery is antagonistic, to his status as a member of the Order of the Khalsa. The position is implicit in the very name 'Khalsa', which in the terminology of the Mughal administrative set up, current at that time, meant the personal domain of the monarch. By analogy, the Khalsa is to owe allegiance to none other than God. Explicitly, the Gurmukhi does not mince words ; 'my Khalsa is the sovereign's sovereign.' And also this status cannot be tinkered with by any mortal because it is laid down in the original doctrine of the Khalsa which Order is created in accordance with the Will of the Timeless One. (ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੀ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ)

Secondly, a sensitive study of the Sikh History reveals that its dominant impulse, its very motive force, has been, throughout, the same urge for the attainment of a sovereign state. The guidelines were provided by Nanak the First with the declaration, 'they are grossly ignorant men and are blind with superstition who cringe before and submit to tyranny, like lifeless cor-

pses', (*Kanre-di-War*) and who exhorted his followers to give up serving mortals, considering it to be a sin of the soul at par with untruth, hypocrisy and duplicity (ਤਜਿ ਕੁੜ ਕਪਟ ਸੁਭਾਉ ਦੁਜਾ ਚਾਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਈਐ) (*Rag Bilawal*). The subsequent Sikh history is merely the march of this idea. Thus the Sikhs, as a community, by virtue of historical development are unfitted to live in a state which does not recognize their sovereign status. Whenever such a State has existed, they fought against it relentlessly, either finally succeeding in making it abandon its absolute claims or ending their own sojourn in such a State by courting death. This was the underlying cause of their long and bloody struggle with the Mughal authorities. It was a duel between the Sikh conception of Double Sovereignty and the Muslim absolutist theo-monist theory of State. 'The Khalsa will rule' (ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ) is thus the cry of History, the call of the future.

By virtue of their religious discipline and training of History, Sikhs have developed a peculiar mentality, the most important ingredient of which is the urge for attainment of a sovereign status. It has become their deep rooted and inalienable psychological need to satisfy this urge. This unique but typical trait of the Sikh psychology must be comprehended in order to understand the oft repeated cry of the well-wishers of the Sikhs that 'the Khalsa will either rule or cease to exist'. Sovereignty has become so much a part of their being that to the extent they renounce it they shall be so much the less Sikhs. This was most correctly understood by the penetrating Sikh historian Rattan Singh Bhangu, author of the *Prachin Panth Parkash*. 'A Sikh takes orders from none and pays no heed to any alien power.' (ਸਿਖ ਕੋਏ ਰਾਖੈ ਕਿਸ ਕਾਣ । ਐਰੇ ਗੈਰੇ ਕਾ ਮਾਨਹਿ ਵਰਮਾਣ). Of a Sikh, he further said, 'he is either a rebel or a sovereign man.' (ਰਾਜ ਕਰਹਿ ਕੈ ਲੜ ਮਰਹਿ). When Bhai Mani Singh was asked to either renounce claims to sovereignty or to prepare for death, he gladly chose to embrace death, echoing

the words of Martin Luther, 'Ich kann nicht anderes.' (I can do no other). This, truly, is the only cry which could have been inspired by a mind trained as the Sikh mind is trained. And this constitutes the third irrefutable argument which makes the Sikh Homeland demand valid.

The fourth one is just as obvious and just as compelling. The political aspirations of the Sikhs were known to the Hindu leaders of pre-partition India. They from time to time made implicit and explicit promises to recognize them. It was, therefore, that the Sikhs gave their support to the freedom struggle, repeatedly turning down tempting offers by the outgoing Britishers and the incoming Pakistanis. They offered more sacrifices for the cause of Indian independence than have ever been offered by any people under the sun, for the realization of political aims not strictly covered by their own aspirations in that respect. Incidentally, these sacrifices amounted to much more than all other communities put together could muster. But once the Britishers were ousted, all promises, to the Sikhs were forgotten. The solemn promises, shamelessly broken, must be repaired. The Sikhs must get their due. It is only the cowards and the imbecile who renounce what has been paid for in blood. Their illustrious ancestors will have fought the Mahabharata in vain if they are not to learn this lesson from it that honour can be redeemed only by obtaining their due.

Lastly, the Sikhs have reasons to believe that the people in power at present are striving in every way and with all the means at their disposal to disintegrate the Khalsa. They seek to debase the Sikh personality, to undermine their potential for making and influencing History and desire to sap their characteristic dynamism. In a word attempts are being made to wipe the Sikhs out of existence. The secret Report of Mr. D. Petrie, Assistant Director, Criminal Intelli-

gence to the Government of India dated October 6, 1911 will make the point under consideration very clear. Para six of this document (now in the National Archives at Delhi) reads.....'The activities of the Hindus have been constantly directed to undermining of Sikhism, both by preventing the children of Sikh fathers from taking the Sikh baptism (*Pahul* and seducing professed Sikhs from their allegiance to their faith.' 'It is to extricate themselves from the clutches of a carnivorous majority, determined to annihilate the Sikhs, that we want the Sikh Homeland. 'The Sikhs want to live as all living things do and they do not want to die. This is the crux of the matter'.

The Sikh Homeland is an absolute necessity also for maintaining intact the proud and hardy peasantry of which class the Khalsa is mostly constituted at present. Of late there have been trends which are having the effect of reducing the Sikh peasantry into mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, devoid of any self-respect

Now, briefly, the doubts raised by the grossly ignorant or the deliberately malicious may be answered. Such people affirm that the Sikh Homeland demand is anti-national and seeks to disintegrate the Union of India and somehow aims at the overthrow of the Constitution. Even a surface reading of this booklet will make it clear to the sufficiently intelligent reader, how wholly misconceived such statements are. The Sikh Homeland is demanded because it is conceived to be a demand which will strengthen the unity of India and will enhance its prestige. Nothing more may be said of this than that the greatest proponent of the Sikh Homeland has offered to, as shall be clear from the pages of this book, to renounce it if it can be proved to be detrimental to the interests of India as a united nation.

The argument concerning the constitutional nature or otherwise of the demand needs a detailed examina-

tion. It is strange that the allegiance of the Sikhs should be demanded or expected to a Constitution which was forced upon them by a brute majority and in total disregard to their well known aspirations. And this in spite of the fact that their representatives to the Constituent Assembly had declared in clear cut language that the, 'Sikhs do not accept this Constitution, the Sikhs reject this Constitution.' Clearly the Constitution is not morally binding on the Sikhs, for might does not create right and what is the result of broken promises, entails no obligations—to say the least.

No one has, however, held that the Constitution of India is not legally binding on the Sikhs which they can repudiate only at their own peril. Even as such, it is not a crime but a fundamental right of the citizens to seek a change in it by means prescribed in the document itself. The Sikhs only demand a redefinition of their status through a perfectly legitimate right of amendment. The Constitution of India is not the word of God that no change in it must be sought. It has been altered more than a score of times in about as many years. What can construe a demand for another alteration into a sedition ?

Then there prevails a vulgar belief that the 'Hindu-Sikh Unity' shall be impaired in the Homeland or by its demand. If by 'Hindu Sikh Unity' is meant the relationship in terms of equality prevailing between two brothers, then there certainly is no danger to any such relationship being impaired. In any case, it is preposterous for the Hindus to believe that such a 'Unity' can be maintained only as long as the Sikhs are not in effective control of the machinery of Government. It is below the dignity of the Sikhs and is contrary to the demands of the true democracy that such a contention should be left unchallenged. There is nothing in the past history of the Sikhs or their present political aims which is detrimental to the interest of Hindus as such. It is significant that similar arguments

were given against the formation of the Punjabi Suba. Any effort to improve the lot of the Sikhs is *ipso facto* opposed with such arguments and by a group afflicted by a mentality but for the existence of which, perhaps, there would not be any need for the Sikh Homeland.

In several ways quite the reverse of this is the argument of some Sikhs, eager to carry favour with the powers that be. They opine that it is detrimental to the interests of Sikhism that the Sikhs should hold political power. With an accusing finger they point out to Ranjit Singh's Raj holding religion to have suffered a set back during his time. The incredible folly in the contention is all too apparent. Even if it were established that the Empire of Ranjit Singh was run according to the doctrines of Sikhism and Sikh religion did actually suffer during his time and that a generalisation from a single example is sufficient to lay down general pattern for all time to come, it would still remain to be proved that the assumption of political responsibility necessarily leads to the decline in the religious sphere. Clearly there are difficulties of great magnitude in accepting this theory. And to accept it would mean the total renunciation of all political aspirations by the Sikh people for all times to come. It would further lead to the absurd conclusion that the interest of Sikhism are best safeguarded when people of some other faith rule a country inhabited by the Sikhs.

Let the Young Khalsa know that those who stop every time a dog barks never reach the end of the road. The list of those communities who failed to perceive or failed to meet the challenge of time and went under is fairly long. It is the young Khalsa who will have to decide what fate they take to be best for their community. It is for you to decide whether after a few decades only stories and half-legends should remain to tell tales of the Sikhs or should the Glorious Panth of the **Guru** be maintained in its characteristic vigour. Being complacent will not do because any community which becomes complacent, by that fact

alone forfeits its right to exist and earns the right to add another heap to the dust of bygone ages.

It is essential in the interest of an integrated Indian nation and mankind at large that the separate Personality of the Khalsa should be preserved. It is for this end that the young Khalsa must strive with all the means at their command. The Khalsa must come up to the expectations of the **Guru** and must truly become, 'a sword in the Hand of God, a fit instrument of the Divine Will'. As the young men everywhere are rising to claim the world, so must you rise but with a loftier air and better mental-equipment. Nothing great, of course, is ever achieved by small men. Let the hopes of the **Guru** so fondly, entertained of you be realized and therefore play the role assigned to you by Him in the present circumstances.

For this purpose the Khalsa must organise itself with an aim of emancipating 'the Sikh masses from the Slavery of spiritual charlatans called '*Sants*' and the sikh Panth from the ruinous leadership of incompetent *thugs* and uneducated hooligans called the *Jathedars*.' It is essential because those communities are soon wiped out, the leadership of which is insensitive to the call of Destiny. Let the Young Khalsa make one supreme effort to take up the abandoned flag of the Master of the White Hawk. This banner is the best guarantee for the prevalence of Dharma in this holy land of India and in the world at large. Can there be a nobler occupation for the sons of **Guru Gobind Singh** ?

* * * * *

Rolling up the parchment containing the Will of Caesar, Mark Antony had asked permission to show him to the masses who had made the Will. Ever-since the men of History have generally followed the sound principle of getting to know the man before reading his thought. So, may be, it is legitimate to indulge in the pleasure of introducing Sirdar Kapur

✓ Singh, the greatest protagonist of the Sikh Homeland demand. The reader will not be encumbered with the dates of the various events in his life nor with the lists of his achievements. Partly, because, all this is too well known and partly because any such list must of necessity be considerably long. Neither do I wish to discuss his brilliant student career nor his most Sikh-like conduct while in the Indian Civil Service. How he preserved his self-respect in the a face of heavy odds and how he maintained the dignity which inheres in a human being by virtue of being human, is a separate and a very edifying story in itself.

✓ I have had several satisfying, elevating, enlightening and delightfully friendly conversations with him from time to time. It is with reference to these that I wish to introduce the reader to my observations of him.

✓ Amongst the self-centred and the vulgar, who judge others by no rational criteria but according to their own untutored whims, the Sirdar is represented as a haughty person finding it difficult to contain his pride. I have, however, known him to be the humblest of the able people, I know. His humility is especially apparent when one reflects on his conception of his role in theorizing on the Sikh Homeland. During the course of a conversation, he told me, once, that he was like a shepherd who had found a precious stone while rearing his sheep. While engaged upon his mundane duties he had come across the idea of the Homeland. And it was now his duty that he must leave his sheep and proclaim from roof tops what he has found. No offers of great material benefit nor any threats to his life have so far been able to make this 'humble shepherd' go back to his sleep. The respect and affection which he has for all but the thoroughly foolish, is really moving. Though not a very good judge of men, any wolf in a sheep's clothing may pass off as a genuine sheep with our shepherd, he has a very keen eye for ability and respect for anyone who

deserves it.

The Sirdar is a magnanimous person in spite of the fact that he tries to pose as a person indisposed to forgiving. It is perhaps only with the generous aim of supplying his opponents with some slight chances of assailing him plausibly that he so behaves. To forgive is not difficult with him. The trifles he just does not remember and I have known him to forgive errors of astonishing magnitude. Recently when the people, who are not fit enough to blacken his shoes, abused him in the Press, he reacted very sharply as any sensitive man would but the very next day could not remember who had said what of him. Often I have known him to put in a good word for the most incidious of his opponents.

Sirdar Kapur Singh is an original poet. How his soul goes out to beauty and to solitude ! What sensitive reactions to the starlit night or to the foamy white clouds playing like soft puppies in the sky or to the beauty of mother earth when seen from the aeroplane !

During the course of a single trip, once, of about a hundred miles, he touched most profoundly upon a variety of subjects. A learned discourse on the philosophy of Nietzsche, a moving concept of the personality of Gobind Singh, glimpses of the poetic sensitivity of Bhai Santokh Singh author of the *Suraj Parkash*, strains of Materialism in Shaikh Saadi's writings—all this I had the pleasure of listening to. Incidentally, one couplet in Persian discussed that day fully exhibits what he has uppermost and deepest down in his personality, namely, the sense of personal honour. It means, 'I have never seen a dog bowing to another dog. What a miserable thing is a man who bows to another man.'

Such is the person who is engaged in theorizing on the Sikh Homeland. He has made keen and intelligent study of Sikh history and philosophy. A man who is intellectually too honest to hide

the results of such a study, too honourable to renounce the conclusions for material benefits or because of corporeal threats. He is too much committed to the Panth and too much enamoured by the Guru's personality to stifle what he has essentially received for broadcasting. The criticism of the ignorant, or the threats of the rude half-baked politicians have no effect on him for he has contemplated on the Guru's word and is now constitutionally unfitted to fear an army of hooligans or spiritual charlatans, even when single handed. No amount of power or wealth can quiten him for he considers the dust off the Guru's feet to be superior to all the wealth of the seen and unseen worlds.

* * * * *

Concluding, I pray that, 'instinctively as the plant turns to light' may the hearts of the Young Khalsa 'turn to the sun of freedom.'

December 13, 1969.

[Redacted] Singh [Redacted]

ERRATA

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THE GOLDEN TEMPLE : ITS THEO-POLITICAL STATUS

The world-famous Golden Temple of the Sikhs, situated at Amritsar in India, bears *Harmandir*, 'the Temple of God', as its original name and it forms an island in a lake to which the name of *Amritsar* was given by the Nanak V, *Guru* Arjun (1563—1606), in the year 1589, when he laid the foundations of what is now known as the Golden Temple, and the town which grew around this Mecca of the Sikhs has only subsequently acquired the name of Amritsar.

The Nanak V requested his great contemporary mystic and muslim savant, Mir Mohammed Muayyinul Islam, popularly known as *Mian Mir*, to lay the foundation stone of the temple and this fact, as well as the name bestowed on the lake, bears a basic significance in relation to the Sikh doctrines.

The impact of Islam on North Western India in the 11th century had been through military conquest and sword and this had naturally created reactions in the proud and sensitive Hindu mind, that resulted in impassable barriers of hatred and prejudice between the two world-culture currents, and their mutual contacts have, therefore, left irritating and unfortunate monuments of bigotry and misunderstanding, spiritual and physical, that still mark the Indian scene. The Sikh prophets, the Nanaks, desired to level down these barriers with a view to discover and provide a common spiritual ground for the two, Hinduism and Islam, where Hinduism gets over its injured superiority and sense of exclusiveness, and Islam, its arrogance, born out of military superiority. The Nanak V declared :

“Let muslims rediscover the truth that the essence of religious practice is compassion and its goal, the

purification of soul, and that political utilitarianism is foreign to Islam, as such, and let the Hindus concede that Islam, thus understood, is as respectable and ceremoniously pure as the flowers, the silk, the deerskin and the butter-fat.”¹

And since Sikhism was to be this common meeting ground between these two world-culture streams, that is why a prominent muslim divine was asked to lay the foundation of the Golden Temple. *Amritsar*, name was given to the lake encircling this temple, as *amrta* means, the enduring principle of all that is, in Hindu metaphysical thought, and water is the symbol of the first impulse of manifestation of the Unmanifest in Aryan thought-idiom, and the Golden Temple in the embrace of the waters of Immortality, thus, was intended to be a profound symbol of future confluence of the world-cultures into a universal culture for the mankind.

In this temple, the proposed centre of a world-culture and world religion, the Nanak V installed the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, and eversince, the presiding place, even when the Sikh Gurus were personally present, has remained reserved for the Book and the religious ceremonial and services have exclusively and always consisted of prayers to, singing praises of, and meditation upon God in this *sanctum-sanctorum* of Sikhism.

It was in 1609, that the Nanak VI, *Guru Hargobind* (1595—1644) erected the *Akaltakht* edifice opposite the entrance bridge-head of the Golden Temple, upon which the *Guru* sat in state, wearing two swords of dominion over the two worlds, the seen and the unseen, and the peculiar Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty took birth, the essence of which is that a man of religion must always owe his primary

¹ *Musalmanu momdil hovai, antar lei mal dil te dhovai, duniya rang na avai nede jio kusam pat ghio pak hara—Guru Granth. Maru-V. 13, iii. 12.*

allegiance to Truth and Morality, and he must never submit to the exclusive claim of the secular state to govern the bodies and minds of men and the whole of subsequent Sikh History must be seen as an unfolding of this Sikh attitude, if it is to be properly understood. The Nanak X, Guru Gobind Singh (1666—1708) explained this doctrine to mughal emperor, Aurangzib, in a written communication, the *Zafarnameh* (1707), in the following words :

“When all means of peaceful persuasion fail, it is legitimate (for a man of religion) to move his hand to the hilt of the sword.”¹

This Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty promulgated in the beginning of the 17th century, has a curiously modern ring and flavour, as from 19th century onwards, a growing school of writers in Europe have tended to think on the lines in which it is grounded. The main substance of this doctrine is that any sovereign state which includes Sikh populations and groups as citizens, must never make the paranoic pretensions of almighty absolutism, entailing the concept of total power, entitled to rule over the bodies and minds of men, in utter exclusiveness. Any state which lays such claims, *qua* the Sikhs, shall automatically forfeit its moral right to demand allegiance of the Sikhs, and there is thus an eternal antagonism between such a state and the collective community of the Sikhs, represented by the Order of the Khalsa, and in this deadly duel the state shall never emerge out as finally victorious, for, self-destruction is the fruit of the seed of non-limitation, and the status and the prerogatives of the Khalsa are imprescriptible. The 19th century German writer, Schulse, supports the basic premise of this doctrine by asserting that the view that the state is absolutely supreme and incapable of doing wrong is misconceived and dangerous (*Deutsches Staatsrecht*

¹ *Cun dast az hameh hilte derguzasht, halal ast burdan b-shamshir dast.*

Vol. I. Sec. 16). The whole Sikh history is a relentless *jehad* against this dangerous misconception, and the Sikhs have always insisted that any state fit and entitled to demand their allegiance must *abinitio* recognise and concede its own self-limited character, arising out of the principles of morality, the teachings of Religion, the principles of abstract justice, the principles of the Sikhs' metalegal constitution which lays down that, (1) they must be approached and dealt with at state level as a collective group and entity, and (2) they must be governed impersonally, that is, through the rule of law and not by arbitrary will, and this self-limitation must further be circumscribed by the immemorial customs, long-established traditions and the facts of the history of the Sikhs. This Sikh doctrine, is, in essence, the same which today finds explicit expression in the modern concept of the pluralistic state, which recognises that the state, in practice, is the government, and the government is no more than a group in control of the governmental machinery, and that the aims and objects of this group, may, any time, clash with those of other groups, not in power. The government may be the temporary principal of all such groups, but it is only *primus inter pares*, the elder amongst equals ; it is not the sole repository of power or focal of loyalty. This is, indeed, the sole essence of the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, which finds powerful support in the writings of Professor Harold J. Laski, Mr. G.D.H. Cole, and the French jurist, Duguit, and also Dr. J. N. Figgis. The Sikh revolt during the 17th and 18th centuries, against the Mughal state was, in reality, an attempt to assert their doctrine of Double Sovereignty against the muslim absolutist theo-monist theory of State, as a result of which the Sikhs had to pass through the valley of death, as the narrative that follows would show, before they emerged out with the sceptre of political sovereignty in their hands, and it would be well to understand that the present bitterness and misunderstanding that clouds relations between the Sikhs and the state

is also grounded in the same doctrinal conflict.

In 1708 **Guru** Gobind Singh, after protracted, discussions and parleys with the Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah, the son and successor of Aurangzib, came to the firm conclusion that "all means of peaceful persuasion" had failed, and it had, therefore, become the right and duty of the Sikhs to "move the hand to the hilt of the sword", and in the same year, (February, 1708), the **Guru** initiated a Hindu yogi and occultist, Madhodaś *bairagi*, as a Sikh and renamed him, Banda Singh, and then appointed him the generalissimo of the Sikhs, after conferring upon him the military title, *Bahadur*. Banda Singh Bahadur, was then ordered to proceed to Punjab with the assignment of, "due chastisement of the Mughal rulers, who have usurped the power that belongs to the people, condign punishment of those guilty of atrocities, destruction of their military bases and re-establishment of the freedom of the people."³ Banda Singh Bahadur carried out his assignment with admirable fidelity and in 1710, declared the freedom of the province of Sirhind, fixed as its capital the fortified Mukhalispur, in the hills, near Ambala, and the Sikhs adopted the legend on their state seal, which began :

"We, hereby place our impress of sovereignty upon both the worlds, the seen and the unseen"⁴ and thus they reiterated the basic doctrine of Sikhism, that of Double Sovereignty.

After the collapse of political power of the Sikhs under generalissimo Banda Singh Bahadur, in 1716, there follows a complete blackout till 1721, when the Sikhs shifted their centre of activities, their spiritual and political capital and their acropolis to the Golden

³ "Turken te nij levan bair pathio Gur ne mujh ko kar banda, mai kar khuar bajide ko mar Sarhind ujad karehon suchhanda. Giani Gian Singh *Panthprakash*, Kavita (1880), III, 572

⁴ "Sikkeh zad bar har du alam."

Temple, the lake that surrounds it, and the complex of buildings, including *Akaltakht*, that are attached to it.

Eversince 1721, the Golden Temple, with the complex of attached structures, has remained the centre of the Sikh world, the Sikh history, the Sikh politics and the Sikh theophany. Throughout the last 250 years, whether the Sikhs were declared as outlaws by the state, whether the Golden Temple and its adjuncts were reduced to mass of ruins or they were forcibly occupied by the state, whether the Sikhs were a sovereign people or politically subjugated, they have never abandoned or compromised the position that, (1) the Golden Temple and its adjuncts are the hub of the Sikh world, not as a matter of concession by any worldly power, but as the inherent right of the Sikh people, *suigeneris* and inalienable, and (2) there is no ultimate dichotomy in the true Sikh doctrine between this world and the next, the secular and the religious, the political and the spiritual.

This position and this status of the Golden Temple is unique in the religious or political centres of world history. It is the Mecca of the Sikhs, because it is the religious centre of the Sikhs, but it is vastly more. It is the St. Peter's at Rome, for it is the capital of Sikh theocracy, but it is very much more and also something less and different. Sikhism has no ordained priestly class and, therefore, there can be no theocratic political state of the Sikhs in which the priests rule in the name of an invisible God. They have no corpus of civil law of divine origin and sanction and they, therefore, must have a state based on secular non-theocratic laws. It is, more, because it remains the real capital of ultimate Sikh allegiance, whatever the political set-up for the time being. It is the Varanasi or Banaras of Sikhism, because it is the holiest of the holies of the faith, but it is not precisely that because the true Sikh doctrine does not approve of any tradition or belief which seeks to tie up theophany with

geography. It is the Jerusalem of Sikhism because it is the historical centre of the epiphany of Sikhism, but it is not precisely that because Sikhism, as a religion, is not history-grounded, that is, its validity is not tied up with or dependent upon any historical event. It is not precisely the political capital of the Sikhs, because political capital presupposes a state under the control of the Sikhs, and when the Sikhs do have such a state, it is not imperative that its administrative centre must be at Amritsar, and even when it is, the Golden Temple and its precincts shall still retain their peculiar independent character apart from this administrative centre. When the Sikhs do not have a sovereign state of their own, the Golden Temple, with its surrounding complex, continuously retains its theopolitical status, which may be suppressed by political power, compromised by individuals or questioned by politicians, but which remains and never can be extinguished, for, it is *suigeneris* and inalienable, and imprescriptible.

It is owing to this unique status, grounded in certain peculiar doctrines of Sikhism that, many misunderstandings continuously arise concerning the use of the Golden Temple with its surrounding complex, for "political purposes", for allowing ingress into it and housing of those whom the political state may deem as "offenders", and for pursuing, "extra religious activities" from inside its precincts. The Sikhs, themselves, have never viewed any of these activities, started or controlled from inside the precincts of the Golden Temple, as either improper, or repugnant to the Sikh doctrine, or contrary to the Sikh historical tradition.

The reasons for this Sikh attitude are three, in the main, not singly, but collectively.

One reason is that this geographical site itself is charged with theopathic influences such as no other known and still accepted site on earth, including the old site of the Solomon's Temple, revered by three great religions of the world, Judaism, Christa

Islam, can claim to be. Eversince the man on this earth became civilised in any comprehensive sense, about four or five millennia ago, imagination seems to find some foothold to countenance the belief that the lake engirdling the Golden Temple was, in all probability, a centre of the most basic activity of man, the religion. The most extensive pre-classical civilisation of the world, the Indus Valley civilisation, stretched, in the third millennium B. C. from Rupar at the foot of the Simla hills to Sutkagendor near the shores of the Arabian Sea, a stretch of one thousand miles, and the site of the Golden Temple lies in the heart of this great river-system. The prominently situated "Bath" or *sarovar* in the newly dug up ancient mound of Mohenjodaro, as readily suggests to mind the central significance of water reservoirs in the metaphysical thought-idiom and religious practices of these ancient people as it springs before the mind's eye, the Golden Temple, lake-surrounded. Our protohistorical records, the *Pauranas*, and the pre-christian era Buddhist traditions definitely assert that, from ancient times, there has existed a natural and holy lake of water, *where the Golden Temple is now situated and the geo-physical layout of the site amply confirms the probability of these assertions. A bird's eyeview of the area, from an aeroplane even today would confirm the conclusion that, this site must have been a natural water reservoir for thousands of years past. The vedic and Buddhist traditions of holiness attached to

*In *Vaivasyatpaurana*, a *genere* of ancient Sanskrit text reduced into literary form in about the first century of Christian era, but of much greater antiquity of contents there is mention of *Amarkunda* (synonym for *Amrtsaras*, Punjabi, *Amritsar*), 'a holy lake situate betwixt the rivers *Vipasa* (Modern *Bias*) and *Airavati* (Modern *Ravi*)', for the possession of which, in the pre-History epoch of creation, a fierce struggle took place between the gods and anti-gods, for, the outcome of this struggle would decide as to whether the forces of religion will triumph in the current worldage or those of irreligion. The gods came out victorious and *Amritsar* is now the centre of oecumenical religion.

this site and the lake suggest an earlier and more ancient origin of this attachment, extending back to the third and second millennia of the Indus Valley civilisation, on the basis of the historical trend that once a holy place, always so and that, a new holiness must be grounded in some older one. The creative imagination, therefore, is justified in discerning grounds for the belief, not altogether fanciful, that the holy lake and the site of the Golden Temple, was an ancient centre of theophanic human activity, at the dawn of human civilisation, round about 5,000 years ago, peopled by the Mohenjodaro race, and further, that it was an equally well revered spot for the theomantic Rishis of the Vedas. It is interesting to recall here that when [redacted] Arjun was having the ancient alluvium of this lake cleared, a sealed masonry subterranean dome was sounded and exposed, which on being opened up revealed a macerated yogi in lotus-posture, immersed in seed-less, *nirbija*, trance. When the [redacted] re-animated him, he disclosed that he went into his trance "thousands of years ago", with the object of experiencing the somatic touch of the Nanak, before entering into the utter Void. This spot was commemorated by the [redacted] by the subsidiary lake, *Santokhsar*, which stands till today. Were some of the vedic hymns actually revealed to the Aryans at the banks of this ancient holy lake, just as the major portions of the [redacted] in the 17th century were? Intuitive imagination guesses so, and there is no good reason to think otherwise. In the early centuries of the Christian era, when the oecumenical religion of the Mahayan took birth in the North West India in the form of the original *Prajnaparmitta* and the *Sadharmapundrika sutras*, the Golden Temple site and the holy lake were already an active centre of beehive Buddhist monk-communities, of which the great Nagarjun and Aryadeva themselves might have been the abbots, during the periods of their creative activity, and if herein the intuitive imagination hovers near the truth, then it emerges that the site of the Golden Temple and

the banks of its surrounding waters are the scenes of earliest spiritual activity of the civilised man, the highest watermark of the theomancy of the vedic Aryans, the greatest achievement of the Buddhist mind and the most glorious afflorescence of the *genius loci* of the Punjab. Coming to near modern history and times, the founder of the Lamaist Buddhism in Tibet, Padamsambhava, a professor at Nalanda university who was invited to Tibet by the great king, Khri-sron-Ide-btsan (745—797) in 747 A.D. is the patronsaint of Tibet and one of the greatest figures of Buddhism, and he is called, 'Lotus-born', to signify his theomorphic status, while his biographies unanimously agree that the 'Lotus' out of which he took his non-human birth, floated on the limpid waters of a sacred lake, which is identified as now surrounding the Golden Temple. To this day, devout Tibetans make long and hazardous journeys to visit and pay homage to this sacred spot of the marvellous origination of the *Guru Rimpoché*, the Precious Master.

If many of these surmises lack palpable root and material evidence, the fact does not render the intangible pull of this picture on the racial subconscious mind, any the less potent, and, indeed, the circumstance multiplies this potency manifold, as keen students of religious psychology well know.

Such a site, surcharged with such ancient and potent spiritual influences it was that the Sikh Gurus chose as the centre of the new world-religion and world-culture, which they inaugurated, and instinctively sensing its high spiritual potency in relation to the future of mankind, the Sikhs, during the last 250 years, that the secular state powers, in utter disregard and blind ignorance of, the implications of the Sikh doctrines have tended to regard this geographical spot as just another area subject to their political domain, have paid the highest price demanded of them, in vindication of the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple.

The second reason, therefore, which fortifies the basic Sikh attitude concerning the theo-political status of the Golden Temple is grounded in the nimbus of the Sikh history that hangs over it and provides guiding precedents to the Sikh mind.

Till the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, the Nanaks, the Sikh Gurus, were centres of the Sikh movement, and afterwards, Banda Singh Bahadur took over the command of their political affairs. It was after the execution of Banda Singh Bahadur, and the collapse of the Sikh sovereignty which he had established on the political plane, that the Sikhs, collectively assumed the rights and duties of their doctrine of Double Sovereignty, and in 1721, Bhai Mani Singh was installed as the head-priest of the Golden Temple, who, immediately took steps to revive the true theo-political status of this place. A free community kitchen for the visitors and the disabled was started and politico-civic activities of the Sikh people were gathered afresh to be rooted around the Golden Temple. Khushwaqt Rai, the author of the manuscript, *Tarikhi Sikhan*, (1811) says that at this period, the Sikhs "lived in caves and thorny bushes, and subsisted on roots and blades of grass, and Zakriya Khan, the military governor of the Punjab, wondered that the grass-eaters should be so bold as to lay claim to sovereignty." (*Folio 44.b*).

In 1733, when the Mughal government found that extreme measures of persecution had failed to persuade the Sikhs to compromise their basic doctrines and attitudes they conceded to the Sikhs the status of a sub-nation, an autonomous political status, analogous to that offered to the Sikhs in early 1947 by Mr. Jinnah of the Muslim League. A revenue grant of a hundred thousand rupees and the *Letters patent* of the Nawab were conferred upon the Sikhs, which they accepted with the reservation that, 'the Khalsa meant to rule freely, cannot accept permanently, a subordinate position.' (Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, *A Short His-*

tory of the Sikhs, Orient Longmans, p. I. 121). All these developments took place and were finalised within the precincts of the Golden Temple, in front of the *Akaltakht* and further, these arrangements show that the government of the day, even during those early days of Sikh history, fully appreciated that the Sikh doctrines envisage that the state must deal with them as one people, and not by atomising them into individual citizens. Immediately, at the conclusion of these arrangements, the Sikhs proceeded to establish five military cantonments, one at the lake of the Golden Temple and the other four, at the remaining four sacred tanks that constitute the adjuncts of the Golden Temple, the *Ramsar*, the *Bibeksar*, the *Lachhmansar* and the *Kaulsar*. These arrangements, by their very nature, were doomed to failure and consequently, in 1736, the Mughal government authorities occupied the Golden Temple and its precincts, and it was under these circumstances that, Bhai Mani Singh approached the authorities for permission to celebrate the Sikh consortium of *divali* in November, 1738 and he undertook to pay a sum of Rs. five thousand to the state for police arrangements, on the explicit condition that the government would not interfere, directly or indirectly, in the right of the Sikhs to collect at the Golden Temple, in complete freedom. Since the government authorities deliberately broke the terms of the agreement, and as is the invariable custom of governments, accused Bhai Mani Singh of having done it instead. Bhai Mani Singh accepted the penalty of death, inflicted by hacking his body into bits, limb by limb, rather than agree to pay the stipulated amount of Rs. five thousand, or earning a reprieve otherwise. The next year, 1739, saw the invasion of India by the terrible Nadir Shah, who sacked Delhi, put its inhabitants to sword, and took away the pea-cock throne and the *Kohi-noor* diamond, as loot in his haversack. It was the "grass-eaters", the Sikhs alone, out of all the peoples of India, who then came out of their caves and thorny bushes to attack the rear of the returning in-

vader, till he reached Lahore, exhausted by this harassment, and the following conversation is recorded by a contemporary, between Nadir Shah and Zakariya Khan, the military governor of the Punjab :

Nadir Shah : "Who are these mischief-makers, any way" ?

Zakariya Khan : "They are a group of vagabond mendicants who visit their Guru's tank twice a year and then disappear."

Nadir Shah : "Where do they live ?"

Zakariya Khan : "Their homes are their horse-saddles."

Nadir Shah : "Take care, my son, the day is not distant when these rebels will take possession of thy country."

Here again, it was recognised by all concerned that, the Golden Temple is the hub of the Sikh universe. After its occupation by government in 1736, the Temple and its adjuncts were put to profane secular use, and were converted into central offices of the district officer, Mussalihul-din, popularly known as *Massa Ranghar*. When the news of this profane secular use of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Golden Temple reached a group of Sikh refugees in the far off Jaipur, two of them travelled all the way to Amritsar, after taking a solemn vow that they would either cut off and bring back to Jaipur, the head of this arrogant government official or never return alive at all. In early August, 1740, this presumptuous government functionary was beheaded on the spot, during the early office hours, and his head was carried to the assembled Sikhs at Jaipur, in vindication of the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, with the Golden Temple as its acropolis.

The Sikh people thus lived a precarious existence, as stateless outlaws and aliens in their own homeland,

when in 1746, Lakhpatrai, a Hindu *diwan*, or chief minister of the military governor of the Punjab, took it into his head to out-herod Herod, to display greater zeal even than the Mughals to destroy the Sikhs and Sikhism and besides ordering a genocide of the Sikhs, caused it to be,

“announced with the beat of drum that no one should read the Sikh scriptures, and anyone taking the name of the *Guru* should be arrested and his belly ripped open. Even the word, *gur*, (molasses), which sounded like *Guru* was not to be uttered, but the word, *rori* was to be used instead. The word, *gurmukh* was also to be replaced with, *pothi*. Many volumes of the holy *Guru Granth Sahib* were collected and thrown into rivers and wells. The tank of the Amritsar was filled with earth.”
(*A Short History of the Sikhs, op.cit. page I. 132*).

It is not to be supposed that a man of the keen intelligence of his race and an energy peculiar to that by a subordinate position inspired, the chief minister Lakhpatrai would have missed the central significance of the Golden Temple and its adjuncts in the Sikh scheme of things, and, therefore, whereas he strove to destroy the cultural roots of the Sikhs, he did not neglect the Golden Temple in view of its theo-political status.

In March 1748, the Sikhs emerged from their hide-outs and drove away the occupation forces from the Golden Temple, built a mud-fort to defend it, and reiterated that the Sikh people were an indivisible entity and sovereign *suigeneris*. (Giani Gian Singh, *Panthprakash, Vartak*. Delhi, 1892. p. 907), In full realisation that, in the plains of Amritsar, neither their fighting strength nor the flimsy protection of mud-walls could save them from sure destruction by the Mughals, they resolved that, “no better death is conceivable for a Sikh than that which overtakes him while defending the great Cause of Sikhism at this centre of Sikhism.” (Rattan Singh, Bhangoo, *Prachin Panthprakash*, (1837). Amritsar, 1914, p. 325). It must always be borne in

mind that this "great Cause" is essentially theo-political in content and not merely sorteriological, in the scheme of peculiar Sikh values, a position which is not correctly appreciated by those who honestly castigate Sikhs for mixing up politics with religion.

In 1749, the Sikhs cleared the holy lake of Amritsar of the debris with which it was gutted by the chief minister Lakhpatrai, and in 1757, the Afghan conqueror, Ahmedshah Abdali, invaded India for the fourth time, when he found, as before, that the Sikhs, of all peoples of India, resented his incursions into their country the most and made no secret of this resentment. Well understanding the theo-political status of the Gooden Temple and its adjuncts, the redoubtable Abdali, had the temple demolished, its adjuncts destroyed and its lake filled up and ploughed over, a strange precursor of the Second World-war Morgenthau plan of the Allies, calculated to eviserate culturally and industrially the German people. The Sikhs, however, refused to be cowed down, and in April, 1758, when the combined forces of the Marathas and the Sikhs had succeeded in driving out of the country the Afghan occupation forces, the Golden Temple was rebuilt and its holy lake cleared up, through the labour of the enemy prisoners-of-war and under the direct supervision of the famous maratha chiefs, Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar, who then humbly made an offering of Rs. one hundred twenty five thousand at the Golden Temple and received ceremonial robes of honour from its head priest. These maratha chiefs well understood that the restoration of the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple was an integral part of their grand national project of regaining liberty of the people and the freedom of India.

In November, 1760 the Sikhs again assembled before the *Akaltakht*, at the Golden Temple and declaring themselves as the *Sarbatt Khalsa*, a Sikh theo-political doctrine, by which the Sikhs assume the powers

and status of the centralised conscience and will of the people, resolved to take possession of Lahore, the seat of the Punjab government, a project delayed somewhat by the fifth invasion of the Abdali, the same year. Abdali crushed the Marathas as an all-India power in the historic battle of Panipat, fought on January 14, 1761, but when the victorious invader was returning to Afghanistan, the Sikh chiefs again assembled at the Golden Temple and resolved to take all possible measures to rescue the Hindu and Maratha young women being carried away as war booty by the Afghans. In pursuance of this resolution, the Sikhs made a determined attack on the rear of the foreigner at the Goindwal ferry of river Bias, and rescued over two thousand young women from the clutches of the Abdali and made arrangements to return them to their original homes. (James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs*. London, 1778, p., II. 22). This process of rescuing young women, the Sikhs followed, till the invader crossed the river Jhelum, and this whole campaign was considered, resolved upon and sustained from the Golden Temple and its precincts.

In 1762, the Abdali returned to India on his sixth invasion, with the specific object of liquidating the Sikhs completely and finally, of destroying their cultural and spiritual roots and of extirpating their very memory from the minds of the people, so that there remains then, no power in India cherishing the temerity of opposing him. In a lightning attack, this greatest of generals that Asia has produced, the Abdali put to sword a large portion of the Sikh people, men, women, and children, over thirty thousand of them, near Ludhiana, took possession of the two original volumes of the holy *Granth*, prepared by Nanak V and Nanak X, and then proceeded to complete his task by blowing up the Golden Temple with gun-power, destroyed its other adjuncts, and filled the holy lake, after desecrating it "with the blood of cows." (*A Short History of the Sikhs. op. cit. p. I. 171*). The Abdali, knowing full

well the theo-political significance of the Golden Temple, had these operations carried out under his personal supervision, as a consequence of which he was wounded on the nose by a flying brick-piece on April 10, 1762, which wound remained a festering incurable sore till he died of it, on October 16, 1772, at Toba Maruf in the Siuleiman hills of Afghanistan. The Abdali, however, had stayed in the Punjab, throughout the year, 1762, and on 17th October, 1762, more than sixty thousand Sikhs assembled at the ruins of the Golden Temple to challenge and chastise the Abdali, for the arrogant sacrilege he had committed. Offers of peace and negotiations made by the Abdali were contemptuously and summarily rejected by the Sikhs, and they inflicted a signal defeat on him and forced him to retire towards Lahore, and thus the Sikhs sought to vindicate the theo-political status of the Golden Temple. Charat Singh, the grand-father of *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, was then placed in charge for restoring and rebuilding the Golden Temple and its holy lake.

It was on April 10, 1763, when the Sikhs, as usual, had assembled at the Golden Temple in their bi-annual concourse that,

“some brahmins of Kasur came and complained against the Afghan inhabitants of their city, especially against the grandee, Uthman Khan, who had forcibly carried away the wife of one of them and converted her to Islam. Hari Singh Bhangi volunteered to help the aggrieved brahmins, and being supported by Charat Singh, after making a theo-political resolution, *gurmata*, led an expedition against Kasur. Uthman Khan, with five hundred of his men was killed, and the brahmin lady was resorted to her husband.”

—(Ghulam Mohayudin, *Twarikhi Punjab*. Persian Ms. (1848); also, *A Short History of the Sikhs*. *op. cit.* p. I. 174).

In October, 1764, Ahmad Shah Abdali, invaded India for the seventh time, and on December 1, 1764,

he paid a military visit to the Golden Temple to satisfy himself that the Sikhs no longer used this spot for "political activities". He found thirty Sikhs standing guard at the entrance-gate of the Golden Temple, under the captaincy of *Jathedar* Gurbakhsh Singh, whose mussoleum still stands behind the *Akal Takht*. "They were only thirty in number. But they had not a grain of fear about them. . . . They were resolved to sacrifice their lives for the Guru", tells us (*page*, 100), muslim eye-witness, the author of the *Jangnameh*, (1766).

On April 10, 1765, after the return of the Afghan invader, the Sikhs again assembled at the Golden Temple and took the political decision to occupy Lahore, as the seat of the Government of the Punjab and from that day till 1850, the Golden Temple and the Government of the Punjab with its other territories, remained under the sovereign dominion of the Sikhs. The Golden Temple and its adjuncts, even during the Sikh raj, retained their theo-political autonomy and the writ of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not run within its precincts.

41 In 1850, the British masters of the Punjab took over the Golden Temple and its adjuncts under their direct administrative control and till the conclusion of the First World War, its theo-political status was maintained and superficially respected through a fiction and a device, into which the Sikhs willy-nilly acquiesced, after their failure to dislodge the British in more than one attempts. The fiction assiduously cultivated was that the British were the allies of the Khalsa, come to Asia in fulfilment of a prophecy of the *Guru*, to prepare ground for the eventual victory of the great Cause of Sikhism, that of fostering a world-culture and establishing a universal Society. The device was of managing the ceremonial and services of the Golden Temple and its adjuncts through a government-appointed Sikh manager, a kind of arrangement which the present rulers of India seem to

aim at, but without the accompanying fiction. This arrangement broke down, when at the time of Jallianwala massacre in 1919, the British made the mistake of seeking to use the theo-political status of the Golden Temple in approval of the action of General Dyer. The Sikhs rose as a body against this un-Sikh-like subversion of the true status of the Golden Temple, and the Akali movement into which this Sikh resentment took shape, eventually succeeded in wresting the possession and management of the Golden Temple from out of the British hands, who by a statute passed in 1927, handed over not only the Golden Temple, but also other Sikh historical shrines in the Punjab, to a democratically elected body of the Sikhs, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, and this committee still retains its rights and privileges, thus won.

Throughout the remaining British period, till 1947, the Sikhs zealously guarded the theo-political status of the Golden Temple and throughout, never hesitated to assert their right to use it and its precincts for the integrated Sikh activities of a theo-political character. Those into whose hands has now passed the power of running the Government of India, not only upheld this right of the Sikhs so to use the Golden Temple, but they have, on numerous occasions, themselves so-employed these precincts.

When in 1921 the British India Government, through their official representative, handed over the keys of the Golden Temple to Baba Kharak Singh, the veteran Sikh leader, *Mahatma* Gandhi sent him the following telegram :

“Congratulations. The first decisive battle of Indian freedom has been won.” *Mahatma* Gandhi well knew, not only all about the theo-political status of the Golden Temple, but also knew and recognised that it was the centre of a world-movement for a universal culture and a united world-government, and

thus it was basically integrated to the *weltanschauung* of Indian freedom, which later he refused to consider as a mere national independence from foreign rule.

It was only after 1947, that, these politicians and men in power have taken umbrage at the Sikhs' desire to continue in enjoyment of their basic and historic rights pertaining to the true status of the Golden Temple, and as their repeated attempts to obtain control over the Golden Temple and other Sikh shrines, through their party men, the congressite Sikhs, have been, on every occasion, foiled by a wide-awake and resentful Sikh electorate, their anger and their objections against the Sikhs taking the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple seriously, have mounted. It is now asserted that the Sikhs, in some way, transgress against the Holy Ghost and act treasonably, by employing the Golden Temple and its precincts for the purpose, for which they have always been employed, and for which they were intended from the very beginning. A grievance is loudly made out that the Sikhs, that is, such Sikhs who do not fall in line with the ruling party, mix up the profane with the sacred and thus injure the interests of the Sikh religion, about which their own solicitude is claimed to be greater than that of the Sikhs themselves. Be that as it may, it must be granted that, the claims that the Sikhs make and the practices in which they indulge, have no element of novelty in them, for, they are in accord with their past history and traditions, their beliefs and their doctrines, and therein, they are neither guilty of insubordination nor of recalcitrance in relation to those who today wield the power of state, and if they displease and irritate, the fault lies not in their present temper or understanding but in their spiritual constitution and historical psychomental make-up, and that for which no individual is responsible, no individual can be blamed in fairness.

What is the third reason, the psychopathic and historical besides, which accounts for the present Sikh

problem, which is again and again concretised around the theo-political status of the Golden Temple ?

It has been said earlier that, it arises out of the peculiar doctrinal position of the Sikhs, out of which this theo-political status of the Golden Temple stems. This doctrinal position must eventually be traced to their view of the ultimate reality and the way it has been interpreted in relation to the historical process through which the Sikh movement has passed. Sikhism does not recognise any ultimate dichotomy between the real and the unreal, and hence between the sacred and the profane, though it recognises a distinction between them, difference of immaculation between them. "God is real and all that He createth is likewise real, and there is naught but that He createth it." (*Guru Granth, Gauri, Sukhmani V. 23.5*). Sikhism, therefore, enjoins that a religious life must be lived and practised in the socio-political context. "The God is immanent in the human socio-political activity ; know this through an understanding of the Word of the Guru" (*Ibid. Kanre-ki-var. III.*) It is from these premises that the validity of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Golden Temple, where nothing but the praises of God and meditation upon Him may be made, conjoined to the *Akaltakht*, where the highest and the most hazardous political deliberations and decisions are frequently taken, arises. This ideological base then animates the peculiar metalegal constitution which **Guru** Gobind Singh finally gave to the Sikh society.

"Previously, the ultimate authority had rested with the **Guru** **Guru** Gobind Singh, however, had abolished the personal Guruship and had vested it in the holy **Guru** to be administered by the Khalsa.... The essential features of this central authority were that it was to be one and that it was to be exercised impersonally."—(*A Short History of the Sikhs. op. cit. p. I. 110-111*).

From this it follows that, (1) the Sikhs, wherever they happen to be in any appreciable numbers, have a

right to be dealt with as a civic group, and an attempt to atomise this group for exercise of political power over them, constitutes an infringement of this right. The postulate behind this law of Sikh social constitution is that on the sociopolitical level, the significant unit is the group rather than the individual, for, it is the group which lays down norms of conduct for the individual, (2) Political subjugation or slavery is incompatible with the basic constitution of Sikh society, (3) it is the implied right of the Sikhs to assemble freely, as such, to consider and deliberate upon any matters, that they may deem as vital to their interests, irrespective of whether these matters are of this world or of the other, and (4) the Golden Temple, and by analogy, the other Sikh places of worship, have a theopolitical status which is not a matter of concession by a political state, but is a right, *suigeneris*.

These are the four socio-political doctrines which are implicit in the Sikh way of life, and it is these doctrines which impel a Sikh and the Sikhs to abhor personal rule or group-domination.

“From the observations that I have made of the Sicques they would appear to be a haughty and high-spirited, people. Once I travelled in the company of a Sicque Horseman for some days, and though I made to him several tenders of my acquaintance, he treated them all with great reserve and a covert sort of disdain. There was no reason to be particularly offended by this hauteur towards me, for, he regarded every other person in the same manner. His answer, when I asked him very respectfully, in whose service he was retained, seemed strikingly characteristic of what I conceive to be the disposition of the Sicque Nation. He said in a tone of voice and with a countenance which glowed with and was keenly animated by the Spirit of liberty and independence, that he disclaimed an earthly Master, and that he was a servant of only the **Great** on High.” (George Forester, *A Journey from Bengal to England*. London. 1798 p. 294-95).

In the Sikh attitudes and the Sikh temper, which apparently irritate and anger those who have now come into power, it is well to perceive that the Sikhs are doing nothing merely to obstruct somebody's enjoyment of power. They are made the way they are, and they act the way they have always acted, and whether they are to be understood and accommodated or mended and bent, their position should be comprehended clearly, without obscuring prejudices. If the Sikh masses are used by individuals for ulterior purposes, the individuals do so by paying lip service to the convictions that the Sikhs hold dear, and if they resentfully and doggedly have refused to lend ear to others, it is because the others, through wilfulness or ignorance, have failed to take note of these convictions.

In a democratic society, such as that of India of today, the Sikhs need not encounter any contradictions between their own collective convictions and the requirements of the state to which they owe allegiance. If, therefore, there are frictions, the fault must be found somewhere in the sphere of implementation of true democratic processes and the persons who implement them. A satisfied and properly integrated-to-the-nation Sikh people can be an invaluable and lasting asset to any state, more so to India in the soil and traditions of which they are rooted, just as a frustrated or suppressed Sikh people can be an obvious weakness in the strength of the nation.



BETRAYAL OF THE SIKHS

Speech made by Sardar Kapur Singh, in the Lok Sabha, on the 6th September, 1966, opening the Debate on the Punjab Reorganisation Bill, 1966.

Mr. Chairman : Motion moved :

“That the Bill to provide for the reorganisation of the existing State of Punjab and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.”

Shri Kapur Singh : Madam Chairman, I have gone through this draft Bill most carefully and I have heard the hon. Home Minister with the diligence and respect which his speeches and utterances always deserve. Madam Chairman, as it is, I have no option but to oppose this Bill. Like the curate's egg, though it might be good in parts, it is a rotten egg. It might be edible, but only as a measure of courtesy, as it is devoid of nutritional qualities and since its putrefaction is far gone, it is really unfit for human consumption.

✓ **Shri Tyagi :** It depends upon the power of digestion.

Shri Kapur Singh : I am convinced that it is deleterious for the Sikhs however strong their stomachs might be supposed to be, as Mr. Tyagi hints. I oppose this Bill, on behalf of my constituents and I reject it on behalf of my parent party, Shiromani Akali Dal. I do so for three reasons, firstly, it is conceived in sin, secondly, it has been delivered by an incompetent and untrained midwife and thirdly, it is opposed to the best interests of the nation, as it will almost certainly lead to a weakening of national integration and loss of faith in the integrity of those who exercise political power in the country.

✓ **Shri Tyagi** : It is not an illicit child.

Shri Kapur Singh : It is not an illicit child but it is conceived in sin. It may have the vigour of hybrid offspring but, unfortunately, it is an offspring of a miscegenous union, and therefore, I oppose it. I say, it is conceived in sin, because it constitutes the latest act of betrayal of solemn promises—series of solemn promises—given to the Sikh people by the accredited leaders of the majority community, by the revered leaders of the Congress national movement, and by the unchallenged spokesmen of the ruling party.

It will do this House good—it will do the public a lot of good—it will do the people of India, a great deal of good—and it will do the international community a world of good, to listen to a brief narration of this story of betrayal of a people, who, though small in numbers, have not been adjudged as of no consequence in terms of dynamism of History, a people, though modern and forwardlooking, are staunch guardians of the basic insights into Reality of the ancient Hindu race, and a people who though they may be matched in qualities of courage, self-sacrifice and patriotism, have not been surpassed by any community in India or any group of people outside.

Here is the brief story of a callous betrayal of such a people—the Sikhs of India—by those whose flesh of flesh and bones of bones the Sikhs are, and whose ancestors—common ancestors of the betrayed and the betrayers, both—had upheld the highest and the noblest notions and standards of ethical conduct in respect of the subject of keeping faith with fellow men and redeeming promises solemnly made.

I quote from *Mahabharat, Adiparvam*, sub-chapter 74 and verse 25 :

*Yo anayatha santamatmanam anayatha
pratipadayete, kinten na kritam papam
caurainatmapharina*

It means,

“He who has one thing in mind but represents another thing to others, what sin he is not capable of committing ? For, he is a thief and robber of his own self.”

I ask the hon. members to take their minds back to the year 1929, when the All India National Congress met at the banks of the river Ravi—Airavati of our ancestors—and fixed complete Independence as its political goal. On that bitterly cold night of destiny, I was present as one of the student volunteers in the service of the Nation. On the previous day, the Sikhs had taken out a five hundred thousand strong procession with veteran Baba Kharak Singh leading it on elephant back, from under the walls of the ancient fort at Lahore, which was described in THE TIMES, of London, as :

“a most impressive spectacle of human congregation that put the Congress show into shame and shade.”

It was on this occasion that Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, went to meet Baba Kharak Singh, at his place on the Chauburji Road, and gave the Sikhs a solemn assurance that after India achieves political freedom, no Constitution shall be framed by the majority community unless it is freely acceptable to the Sikhs. This promise was then reduced into a formal policy Resolution of the All India Congress Committee.

Afterwards, this Policy Resolution was repeatedly reiterated, officially and demi-officially, throughout the period upto August 1947, and it was not officially repudiated till 1950 when the present Constitution was framed. The trusting Sikhs, who in their Daily Prayer, extoll keeping faith as, the noblest of human virtues, placing complete reliance

in this solemn under-taking given to them by the majority community, resisted and refused all offers and proposals made to them by the British and the other people—the Muslims—whom we now prefer to call, the Muslim League—proposing to accord the Sikhs a sovereign or autonomous status in the areas constituting their ancestral home-land between the river Ghaggar and the river Chenab. This is the first link of the story which I am going to narrate here so as to provide background to the conclusion as to why this Bill should be rejected. The second link is that in the year 1932, at the time of the Second Round Table Conference, the British Government, through Sardar Bahadur Shivdev Singh, then a member of the Indian Secretary of State's Council, made an informal proposal to the Sikhs that if they disassociate finally with the Congress movement, they would be given a decisive political weightage in the Punjab, such as would lead to their emerging as a third independent element in India after the British transfer power to the inhabitants of this sub-continent.

The much maligned, the naive, Master Tara Singh, to my personal knowledge, promptly rejected this tempting offer. I was then a student at the University of Cambridge and was closely associated with these developments.

The third link is this : In the month of July, 1946, the All India Congress Working Committee met at Calcutta, which reaffirmed the assurances already given to the Sikhs, and in his Press Conference held on the 6th July, there, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spelt out the concrete content of these solemn undertakings in the following flowery words :

“The brave Sikhs of the Punjab are entitled to special consideration. I see nothing wrong in an area and a set-up in the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom.”

In these words, an autonomous State to the Sikhs, within India, was promised.

Fourthly, in the early winter of 1946, the Cabinet Mission, while at Delhi, communicated to the Sikhs through the late Sardar Baldev Singh that if the Sikhs are determined not to part company with Hindu India, the British Parliament, in their solicitude for the Sikh people, was prepared to so frame the Independence Act of India, so that in respect of the Sikh homeland, wherever these areas might eventually go, in Pakistan or India, no Constitution shall be framed such as does not have the concurrence of the Sikhs. But Sardar Baldev Singh, in consultation with the Congress leaders, summarily rejected this offer which went even beyond the assurances given by the majority community, in 1929 and in 1946 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in Calcutta.

Fifthly, in April, 1947, Mr. Jinnah, in consultation with certain most powerful leaders of the British Cabinet in London, offered to the Sikhs, first through Master Tara Singh and then through the Maharaja of Patiala, a sovereign Sikh State, comprising areas lying in the west of Panipat and east of the left bank of the Ravi river, on the understanding that this State then confederates with Pakistan on very advantageous terms to the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh summarily rejected this attractive offer and the Maharaja of Patiala declined to accept in consultation with Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sixthly, on the 9th December, 1946, when the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly was held under the chairmanship of Babu Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved the first and the fundamental Resolution in which it was said :

“Adequate safeguards would be provided for minorities.... It was a declaration, a pledge and an undertaking before the world, a contract with millions of Indian, and, there-

fore, in the nature of an oath*, which we must keep." What happens in case of political perjury is not a point I propose to discuss today, for, when neither the feelings of shame, the reproaches of conscience, nor the dread of punishment from any bar is there, the sufferers can only pray to God, which the Sikhs are doing today. But since it is the perquisite of power to invent its own past, I am putting the record straight for the Public opinion and the posterity by recaptulating this sorry tale of betrayal of the Sikhs, a trusting people.

Seventhly, in the month of May, 1947, precisely, on the 17th May, Lord Mountbatten, Pandt Jawaharlal Nehru, Nawab Liqaat Ali Khan and Sardar Baldev Singh, flew to London on the invitation of the British Cabinet, in search of a final solution of the Indian Communal problem. When the Congress and the Muslim League failed to strike any mutual understanding and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru decided to

*To take recourse to a solemn oath, to inspire confidence that might be betrayed when convenient, is quite in the political tradition of the Indian National Congress. On 16th March, 1931, Mahatma Gandhi came to a special Sikh Congregation held in Gurdwara Sisganj, Delhi, where he was asked as to what guarantee there was that his Indian National Congress would implement the assurances given to the Sikh People in 1929, at Lahore. His reply is published in his *Young India*, of the 19th March 1931, and it contains the following :

"Sardar Madhusudan Singh has asked for an assurance that the Congress would do nothing that might alienate sympathies of Sikhs from the Congress. Well,, the Congress, in its Lahore Session, passed a Resolution that it would not enter into or be a party to any settlement with regard to the minority question that failed to satisfy any of the minorities concerned. What further assurances the Congress can give to the Sikhs, I fail to understand.....I ask you to accept my word and the Resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. If it ever thinks of doing so, it will only hasten its own doom.....I pray you, therefore, to unbosom yourselves of all your doubts.....What more shall I say? What more can I say than this : 'Let God be the witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you.'"

When further asked as to what may the Sikhs do in case of betrayal, he said the Sikhs could, in that case, take their *Kirpans* in hand with perfect justification before God and man.

return to India, the British Cabinet leaders conveyed to Sardar Baldev Singh that, if he stays behind, arrangements might be made :

“so as to enable the Sikhs to have political feet of their own on which they may walk into the current of World History.”

Sardar Baldev Singh promptly divulged the contents of this confidential offer to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in compliance with the latter's wishes, declined to stay back and flew back to India after giving the following brave message to the Press :

“The Sikhs have no demands to make on the British except the demand that they should quit India. Whatever political rights and aspirations the Sikhs have, they shall have them satisfied through the goodwill of the Congress and the majority community.”

Eighthly, and lastly, in the month of July, 1947, the Hindu and Sikh members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly met at Delhi to pass a unanimous Resolution favouring partition of the country, in which Resolution occur the following words :

“In the divided Indian Punjab, special constitutional measures are imperative to meet just aspirations and rights of the Sikhs.”

It is these very Hindus of the Punjab, who, with the ready aid of the Government of India leaders, even when their understanding was not qualified to keep pace with the wishes of their heart, adopted every conceivable posture and shrank from no stratagem to keep Sikhs permanently under their political heel, first, by refusing to form a Punjabi-speaking State in which the Sikhs might acquire political effectiveness, and second, by falsely declaring that Punjabi was not their mother tongue.

The Bill before the House is a calculatedly forged link in the chain, the sordid story of which I have

just now narrated. When in 1950, the present Constitution Act in India was enacted, the accredited representatives of the Sikhs—the Shiromani Akali Dal—declared vehemently and unambiguously in the Constituent Assembly that,

“the Sikhs do not accept this Constitution; the Sikhs reject this Constitution Act.”

Our spokesmen declined to append their signatures to the Constitution Act as a token of this clear and irrevocable rejection.

I will, for want of time, skip over the story of the Sikhs' sufferings during the last 18 years in an Independent India under the political control of political and anglicised Hindus, and will merely refer to the reply which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave to Master Tara Singh in 1954, when the latter reminded him of the solemn undertaking previously given to the Sikhs on behalf of the majority community. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru coolly replied, “The circumstances have now changed.”

If there is one thing that the Sikhs know too well, it is that now the circumstances have changed :

Let us now briefly examine the immediate ancestry of the present Bill. It was on 21st March, 1966 that the Minister of Home Affairs set up a Commission presided over by a Supreme Court judge, requiring the Commission, firstly, to examine existing boundaries of Hindi and Punjabi regions of Punjab to set up Punjab and Haryana States ; secondly, by applying linguistic principles as they have resulted in the 1961 census figures ; and thirdly, to determine boundaries that do not involve breaking up of tehsils. All these three guidelines given to the Commission by the Government of India are found to be when they are properly examined by people who understand the realities of our politics, heavily loaded against the Punjab State, and have the effect of reducing Sikhs to even more

political ineffectiveness than at present. Nor has the Shah Commission failed to take full advantage of the instruments of discrimination thus placed in their hands by the Government of India. They have, firstly, arbitrarily truncated and reduced, as much as they could, the existing Punjabi region, and secondly, applied all principles of demarcation with a left-handed justice—made use of a principle where it could harm the Punjab and not used it where it could harm the resultant territorial interests of Haryana or Himachal Pradesh. For instance, Dalhousie has been taken out of Punjab and given to Himachal because it is hilly, while Morni which is of a higher altitude than Dalhousie has been taken away to be bestowed on Haryana, because its residents are Hindus, which is the same thing as saying that they are Hindi-speaking.

Thus, this story goes on and every conceivable stratagem has been adopted, through truncating its areas, through divesting it of its utility undertakings in public sector, and through neutralising its limbs of governmental apparatus and by robbing it of its capital city, and by forging the so-called common links, to reduce the Punjab State into a glorified Zila Parishad and to achieve these sordid, and unedifying objectives, the Judiciary has been made use of.

Madam Chairman, permit me to say that if there is one political crime greater than any other, the ruling party has committed during the post-Independence era, it is frequent employment of Judiciary for quasi-political purposes, and the result is that the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal has passed a Resolution on the 20th July, 1966, which reads :—

“AFTER HAVING CAREFULLY VIEWED the findings, the reports and judgements of judicial and quasi-judicial Tribunals and

Forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests, COMES TO THE CONCLUSION, that the entire judicial machinery and the judicial process of the Independent India, under influences of a certain section of political Hindus, is prejudiced and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights."

Madam Chairman, here, it might be honestly asked, and I am sure there must be many honest Members in this House, who might wish to ask the question as to what is this tiresome talk this man is talking about—the Sikhs' interests in a secular, democratic India; where is the question of the Sikhs being discriminated against? There are no Sikhs or Hindus in a democratic secular set-up, and the Constitution has already established it in this country. To this, I can give a very simple reply. Constitutional provisions are not the same thing as day-to-day political realities. As for the democracy, its form is one thing and its substance is quite another thing. Those who equate them are treacherous without art and hypocrites without deceiving. The *Mundukopanishad*, our ancient scripture, tells us that *Samsara* is the manifestation of four modifications of Self, the *Atma*, and is called as, *chaturpad*. Likewise, a modern State, that is, the Government, has four estates: the Parliament, the Executive, the Judiciary and the Press. The concrete realities of these four alone can furnish an acid test as to whether the Sikh problem in India is a real problem or not.

To the executive and the judiciary, reference has already been made by me. I now propose to make a reference to Parliament, this august House, which is deserving of our highest respect, as its dignity is the dignity of the people of India and hence inviolable. Nevertheless, the Sikhs are aware that,

under the existing constitutional arrangements, they cannot send more than a couple of their own representatives to the Parliament and even they may not always be heard freely. How many times has it happened in this House, in the recent past, that particular Members of the majority communities have been made aware, in no uncertain manner, that they must not—must never—say this thing or that, or else a hearing might be denied them. How many times the disciplinary wrath of the House has fallen on individuals, without hearing them and without letting them subsequently submit that their punishment was not in order ?

And, lastly, the Press. We have a free Press here and a lively and impartial Press—on the whole. But, what is it like when it comes to dealing with Sikhs, that is, politically vocal Sikhs or questions largely concerning the Sikhs ? In the days of his clash with Beaverbrock, Baldwin said of the Press :

“power without responsibility, the privileges of harlots throughout the ages.”

And, I say no more. I have said enough to explain the background of the Resolution No. 2 of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal passed on the 20th July, 1966, wherein occur the following passages in relation to the scope of this Bill :

“SIKHS RESOLVE AND PROCLAIM their determination to resist, through all legitimate means, all such attempts to devalue and liquidate the Sikh people in a free India, and consequently,

DEMAND that the following steps should be taken forthwith by the rulers of India to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the Union of India, namely, FIRST the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new

Punjab to be set up, namely, the areas of Gurdaspur District including Dalhousie, Ambala District including Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, and Ambala Saddar, the entire Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, the areas of Nalagarh, called Desh, the Tehsil of Sirsa, the sub-Tehsils of Tohana and Guhla, and Rattia Block, of District Hissar, Shahabad block of District Karnal, and the contiguous portions of the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, must now be immediately included in the new proposed Punjab so as to bring all contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit, to be the Sikh Homeland, within the Union of India. And

SECOND, such a new Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status on the analogy of the status of Jammu and Kashmir as was envisaged in the Constitution Act of India in the year 1950.

I am coming to a close. Madam, on behalf of the Sikh people represented by the Shromani Akali Dal, I reject the entire schemeta of this Bill, and oppose it. I call upon the Government to take necessary legislative measures to solve the problem of Punjab in the light of the Resolution of the Shiromani Akali Dal, just referred to. (ends).

Manifesto
of
The Shiromani Akali Dal
(1967)

I—POSTULATES

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is an All India political organisation of the Sikh People, a Society grounded in certain postulates concerning mutual human inter-relationships, conditions of man and man's relationship with Reality.

2. These postulates are enshrined in the triad of Sikh Commandments of **Guru** Nanak, *kirt karo, nam japo, wand Chhako*, meaning that, in his relation to Society, man must work and share the fruits of his labour with others, and in his relation to Reality, he must cultivate communion with the Essence of things. Coupled with this triad is the trifacial doctrine of **Guru** Gobind Singh laying down that, (a) individual is the true source of power, (b) he is an end-in-himself and must never be enslaved or expended by others, and (c) prosperity and happiness, in ever-increasing measures, is the birth-right and destiny of mankind.

3. All political programmes and goals and objectives of the Shiromani Akali Dal, derive from, and are grounded in, these two triads of the Gurus in their application to the contingent political situation in which the Sikh People find themselves from time to time.

4. The firm back-ground to all political goals and programmes of the Shiromani Akali Dal, as a mouthpiece of the Indian Sikh People, is irrevocably the ethos and *elan* of the Hindu race, called, *Dharma*, a cultivated active endeavour to understand, assimilate

and co-operate with all cultures and peoples of significance, such as Muslims, Christianity, and modern science and idioms of thought, and faith in the eternal unity of India, such being the explicit Teachings, and implications of the Teachings, of the Sikh Gurus.

II—POLITICAL GOAL

5. It is in this background and context that the Shiromani Akali Dal, ever since 1920, has wholeheartedly and unreservedly co-operated with all phases, and at all levels, of the freedom struggle of India, and has all long resisted, even at the sacrifice of its own long term objectives, all tendencies, trends and attempts at partition of India and furcation of Indian peoples and the Indian soul.

6. All along, throughout these fateful years, the Hindu community, through its representative mouth-piece, the Indian National Congress, held out solemn assurances to the Sikh People that, after India achieves freedom from foreign rule, an area in the north of India shall be carved out to be the Sikh Homeland, internally autonomous and within the constitutional frame-work of an All India Constitution, and other adequate constitutional arrangements shall be made to protect and preserve legitimate interests of Sikh communities, as inalienable limbs of the political Society, that is, the Sikh People, but residing in parts of India, other than the Sikh Homeland or Sikhistan, and the Sikhs, placing implicit trust in these solemn undertakings rejected and spurned all offers made by the British and the Muslims, of a Sikh sovereign State, or permanent guarantees for preserving Sikh interests in the areas constituting the Sikh Homeland, that is, the areas lying between the India river, Ghaggar and the Pakistani river, Jhelum. A brief account of these solemn undertakings, but unhonoured and broken, was given on the floor of the Lok Sabha by our representative, Sardar Kapur Singh, M.P., while initiating debate on the 6th September, 1966, over the discussion of the Punjab Reorganisation Bill, 1966.

7. After the advent of Independence, however, for which the Sikhs made extreme sacrifices and paid the highest price a people have ever paid in History for ideals not strictly covered by their own political aspirations, the new rulers of India adopted every strategem and took recourse to all possible oppressive and suppressive measures, to liquidate the Sikhs as a people from the political mainstream of India, and to demoralise and degrade them.

8. Now, therefore, after passing through bitter experience and tribulations in a free India, the Shiromani Akali Dal has concretised, as its firm demand, the establishment of Sikhistan or the Sikh Homeland within the Union of India, with the boundaries and a constitutional status detailed in the First Resolution, unanimously adopted at the open Session of the 17th All India Akali Conference, held at Ludhiana, on the 11th December, 1966. This Resolution is as follows :

“This open Session of the seventeenth All India Akali Conference, held at Ranjit Singh Nagar, Ludhiana, on the 11th December, 1966, reiterates and adopts the following resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal, on the 20th July, 1966, at Delhi, to wit,

After having carefully viewed the entire situation in which Sikh People have been placed in an Independent India ever-since 1947.

Have come to the inescapable conclusion that, a section of political Hindus, holding key powers in the political India, have a firm plan of degrading and liquidating Sikhs from the main stream of free India, and it is for this purpose that the new boundaries of the Punjab have been determined by the Government of India so as eventually to relegate and contain Sikhs in a narrow, wor-torn, undeveloped and suppressed reserved area, on the pattern of Jewish ghettos in medieval Europe, and reserved areas of apartheid in certain modern States. Now, therefore,

the Sikhs resolve and proclaim their determination to resist, through all legitimate means, all such attempts to devalue and liquidate the Sikh people in a free India, and consequently,

Demand that, following steps should be taken forthwith, by the rulers of India, to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the Union of India, namely,

First, the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new Punjab to be set up, namely, the areas of Gurdaspur Distt. including Dalhousie, Ambala Distt, that is, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Saddar, the entire Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur Distt, the area of Nalagarh, called Desh, the Tehsil of Sirsa, the Sub Tehsils of Tohana and Guhla, and Rattia Block of Distt. Hissar, Shahabad Block of District Karnal and the contiguous portions of the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, must now be immediately included in the new Punjab so as to bring all continuous Sikh areas into an administrative unit to be the Sikh Homeland, within the Union of India.

Second, such a new Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status on the analogy of the status of Jammu and Kashmir as was envisaged in the Constitution Act of India in the year 1950, and,

Third, suitable constitutional and political measures should be adopted, in relation to the other states of the Union of India, such as, provision of deterrent punishments for those found guilty of discrimination and prejudicial acts against Sikhs residing in these states, including statutory reserved appointments of adequate numbers of Sikhs as judges legislators, police-men and executive officials concerned with the administering of justice and making laws and policies."

III—PROGRAMME

9. The Shiromani Akali Dal, at the aforementioned All India Akali Conference at Ludhiana, has

adopted the following programme for achievement of its set goal, through its unanimously passed Resolution No. 2, which is as follows :

“This open Session of the seventeenth All India Akali Conference, held at Ranjit Singh Nagar, Ludhiana, on the 11th December, 1966, resolves that,

After nearly twenty years of Independence, the Congress party has reduced the country, the nation, the Punjab and the Sikh People, as well as other minorities into a state of ruin and despondency, through,

Eroding into and destroying the sanctity and permanence of the Constitution,

Shamefully neglecting and weakening the agriculture and rural peoples under the pretext of big industrialisation and ill-conceived land reforms,

Deliberately destroying the age-old laws and traditions of rural economy and social coherence, by enacting laws, such as Hindu Succession Act,

Perfidiously conspiring to degrade and demoralise the Sikhs and other vital communities of the country.

Mercilessly inflicting high taxation and devaluation of the Rupee and, thus,

Making lives of people miserable by high prices, scarcities and adulterations, and, lastly,

Encouraging and spreading all-round corruption in our national life.

2. Therefore, deliverance from this total misery can only be achieved by ousting the Congress party from the seats of Government in the country and replacing it with democratic, patriotic, sensible and God-fearing parties' Governments.

3. Wherefore, this Conference calls upon the Sikhs and other patriotic elements of the Punjab, to

begin with, to vote for the Shiromani Akali Dal candidates in the coming General Elections, which is the only Party representing the majority of true Punjabis capable of forming an alternative Government here."

IV—POLICIES

10. The Shiromani Akali Dal, while holding that the individual and his inner autonomy, his freedom, his dignity, his right to happiness and satisfaction and self-fulfilment through awareness of and nearness to the true Reality, that is, God, are fundamental and inviolable,

- (1) rejects all **forms of government and state-measures** such as directly or indirectly tend to enslave the individual in the hands of concentrated power of the state or political parties and thus reduce him to means to something other than and external to himself.
- (2) favours forms of State, and measures, such as arouse and sustain creative potential of the individual endeavour and enterprise harnessed for the **Common Good** within the restraining framework of a good and honest government, with a view to destroy and eradicate stagnation and fatalism entrapping Indian Society.
- (3) favours **self-owned** and self-cultivated viable agricultural farms in the Punjab run with generous State aid, on modern lines, such as must form the base of a healthy, equalitarian, proud, freedom-loving and progressive Society capable of successfully meeting crises and resisting oppression from whatever quarter, including that of the State and other forms of tyranny.
- (4) is pledged to help destroy **caste distinctions, social inequities** and curtailments of **human freedoms** as contrary to the great Teachings

of the great Gurus, as well as the conscience of Man.

- (5) favours agriculture-based **industrialisation** of the Sikh Homeland and farm-based dairying and poultry keeping, coupled with afforestation of its submountain areas, and encouragement of other small scale industries feasible for these areas, such as textile, woolen, and machine tool industries.
- (6) favours growth of natural **leadership and co-operative** initiative, freed from the fetters of needless state controls and interference.
- (7) favours abolition of **permit-quota systems and monopolies** in the public and private sectors, both, and restoration of fair and free **competition** in the service of the consumer.
- (8) favours abolition of all newfangled laws and other enactments as tend to erode into the age-old **coherence of our society**, such as certain provisions of the Hindu Succession Act, and a recasting of the laws relating to religious endowments and **public trusts**, with a view to encourage their fresh formations, and help achieve the true objects of such endowments and trusts, and in this context is pledged to the enactment of a new **All India Sikh Gurdwaras Act**, that ensures a more efficient and meaningful management of Sikh places of worship and communal activity, and helps achieve a re-integration of the ancient Sikh preaching Orders, such as *udasis*, and *nirmalas* and others into a dynamic Sikh Society, without encroaching upon their own financial or cultural autonomy.
- (9) favours reductions in **taxes and other state demands**, coupled with sensible planning so as to encourage production, restore the value

of the Rupee and check sacrcities and adultrations.

- (10) pledges to accord thirty percent representation for a stipulated period to the **scheduled castes**, in the government and public services of Sikhistan, who form about twenty percent of its population.
 - (11) offers to **co'operate and associate** with all parties and associations, at state levels and at the Centre, that are democratic, patriotic and sympathetic towards its aims and objects.
 - (12) urges for building up of a strong **defence-potential** including nuclear weapons, along with amplification of areas of **international understanding**, so as to defend and preserve independence and prestige of India, and so so as to gain for India the frontiers tht nature, history and environment have given it and also regain areas lost since August 15, 1947.
 - (13) favours and upholds a state-aided **educational system** and policy aimed at bringing total population into the twentieth century, without losing our inborn culture and without making the mistakes of the 19th century industrial Europe where the contemporary pattern evolved.
 - (14) aspires to a free and self-regulated access to, and control of, all **Sikh sacred places in the west and east of India**, from where the Sikh People have been driven out in the recent past.
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**A PAPER READ BY SARDAR KAPUR SINGH
(Ex. M.P.)**

AT

THE CONVENTION OF SIKH INTELLIGENTSIA

(held at Chandigarh on the 23rd December, 1967)

Master Tara Singh's death, at the ripe old age of 82, has removed from the Sikh world, a person who not only dominated its politics for many decades but who also has been instrumental in putting up firm tracks over which the future politics of the Sikhs must move, for many decades to come. He was as much a product of the times that threw him up and through which he moved, as he was a representative of the historical impulses that have shaped the Sikh people and animated them during the last five hundred years. His failures are more obvious and numerous than his achievements for, he was, by and large, a non-achiever, but his significant success lies precisely in this, that he showed a remarkable perceptiveness of the true destiny of the Sikh people, the Panth, in the history of India, and by implication, in the history of the world, and in his own way, persisted against the current of the times to hold a not-precisely-defined image of this destiny before his people, and the world.

2. What is the shape and content of this destiny ? And how did he try to spell it out ? What does this destiny signify in the modern world-context and the current situation in our country ? These are the most fundamental and truly urgent questions for the Sikhs to consider now.

3. In some ways, the origin and rise of Sikhism in India is a unique phenomenon in the history of the world, New religions arise to give expression to peculiar spiritual yearnings of a people in a given geo-

graphical or historical context. They arise to meet political and social problems consequent upon new impacts of changed economies and centres of exercise of power. They arise for purposes of synthesis and reconciliation between cultures hitherto strangers' to each other. Sikhism is, in some measure, all these, but also something more. It arose out of a violent and apparently irreconcilable clash between the cultures of semitic Islam and aryan Hinduism, and a life-and-death struggle on the battle-field of political conflict between two incompatible social orders and systems of social ethics. It aimed at meeting the challenge where the question of basic human values was involved. This was the essence of the war-cry of Sikhism to the effect that, "Dharma shall be saved and Hinduism preserved, for, this is precisely meant by establishment of Sikhism."

ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਧਰਮ, ਰਾਖਹਿ ਹਮ ਜਗ ਮੇਂ । ਚਲੇਂ ਚਲਾਵੇਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਮਗ ਮੇਂ ॥

Simultaneously, it aimed at calling upon the traditional Hinduism and militant Islam to arise above their respective particularities into a heaven of higher and purer understanding of their respective faiths so as to perceive the essential unity that underlies and sustains them. In addition, Sikhism eventually evolved a political society for the purpose of implementing these basic aims, through creation of political arrangements in the north of India, and in India as a whole, and other regions were necessary. These political arrangements are to ensure that conflicts and tragic consequences, such as clash of Hinduism and Islam gave rise to on the soil of India, are eliminated in future, in a new Indian nation based on tolerant plural societies, and guided and served by the Khalsa. Such a nation then, must become an exemplar for other nations of the world, thus facilitating the emergence of a World Society and a World Government. It is in this sense, that the Sikh congregations, during centuries past, throughout the world, have daily chanted the litany :

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ।

ਖੁਆਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੇਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ॥

It is in view of this peculiar and unique elan and ethos of Sikhism and the Khalsa, that the famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, in his *History of the World*, asserts that the communist Party of Lenin was not a unique and altogether new phenomenon in the history of the world, as Lenin claimed, but that its true prototype was the "Hindu Khalsa of [redacted] Gobind Singh."

4. During the four decades, two decades of pre-1947 and two decades of post-1947, that Master Tara Singh occupied the central position in the Sikh politics, most momentous changes have occurred in the political and psychological history of India. If the spiritual heavals and stirrings of political awareness of the Hindus in the decades before the year 1947 are carefully analysed it becomes clear that the topmost Hindu leaders of thought and action were overwhelmed with two passions and aims, to realise which the entire Hindudom acted in singleness of purpose and with unabated energy. These aims were and have become clear, since 1947, after a seriously truncated India fell into their lap : (1) To gather, to capture and to hold all decisive political powers in the hands of the Hindus and for the Hindus, without possibility of an effective challenge ; (2) To devise and enforce such constitutional arrangements and ideological smokescreens as make the fact (1) invisible to the naked eye in terms of the nursery rhyme :

A hungry spider made a web of thread so very fine,
That naked eye could scarcely see the slender little
line.

The Muslim leadership of a united India espied this "slendar little line" and framed their objectives and attitudes accordingly, but the Sikh leadership showed no better acumen in political understanding here than they have done on several other occasions. Repeated firm and generous offers made by Muslim leadership to the Sikhs to accept an autonomous Sikh-oriented Punjab, externally integrated to Pakistan, and repeated hints and suggestions by the Britishers guaranteeing secure and effective political status to the Sikh people

in their home-lands, were summarily and naively rejected by the Sikhs in return for a treacherous assurance by the Congress that the Constitution of a free India shall not be framed except that the Sikhs accept it freely. When, however, in 1950, the Constitution Act of India was promulgated, the impotent protests of our true representatives, led by S. Hukam Singh, who now adorns the Governor's gaddi in Rajasthan, were contemptuously brushed aside and a *Shaktishali Kendra* for exercise of political power was set up at Delhi with Akali Members of the Constituent Assembly abstaining from affixing their signatures in token of acceptance of the Constitution by the Sikh people.

5. It was in this back-ground that the demand of the Sikhs, led by the Shiromani Akali Dal, arose, for carving out a Punjabi Suba out of the Indian Punjab and its contiguous areas of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. Punjabi Suba was a vague and adjustable concept that neither fitted into the Constitution Act as framed, nor militated against its foundations. Master Tara Singh, however, made it repeatedly clear, through his public statements and writings that the Panjabi Siba (i) Must be such as gathers up main Sikh-inhabited areas under a single government and it (ii) must guarantee and ensure a status and political power to the Sikh people as recognises and establishes them as co-equals of the ruling community in a united India and within a single Indian nation. This is what he meant whenever he asserted, in more impassioned than precise language, that the Panth must be recognised and treated as a fundamental entity in the political arrangements of India and not as an irrelevant mass of atomised citizens of a so-called, secular nation and also that, the Sikhs firmly decline to accept the status of second-rate citizens in relation to their elder brethren, the Hindus. For this, he was subjected to smear-campaigns of vilification and misrepresentation and he was otherwise persecuted, throughout last two decades, by being labelled as a communalist, an obscurantist, a Pakistan-guided quisling and a mental case, and he

was also sentenced to terms of imprisonment and detention, almost as many times as the foreign rulers had done in punishment for his fighting the freedom-battle of India.

6. In 1966, the first Prime Minister of India, who virtually killed Master Tara Singh by persuading him to give up his fast-unto-death through treacherous promise, never intended to be kept, and repudiated soon after they had achieved their purpose, was no more on the scene. Other developments of international import had also taken place necessitating some softening of the hard line so far adopted towards the Sikhs. A truncated, moth-eaten ghetto of a unilingual Punjabi state was then carved out but not till a new Sikh leadership and a new group in control of the potent Sikh gurdwaras was placed in the saddle, that proclaims it as an article of their faith that (a) the Sikhs, as a people, are disentitled to have political aspirations or make demands of their own, and (b) the newly established Punjab is wholly grounded in a language and not in the political aspirations and demands of Sikh people and their instrument, the mystical Khalsa. This leadership further proclaims that it is their firm resolve to fight and destroy all trends and forces that cling to the original aims and objectives of the Khalsa which are contrary to the above mentioned lines of their policy. This leadership and school of thought then actively endeavours to pursue policies that cannot but negate the pristine Sikh impulses, nullify the historical achievements of the Khalsa during the last two centuries and more, and liquidate the unique and most remarkable political society, ever set up hitherto, in the history of mankind namely the Khalsa. Never was such a satanic conspiracy hatched against the Sikhs in the past, except, during the first half of the eighteenth century when a class of Sikhs, called *Hindalias*, set up their headquarters at Jandiala, near Amritsar, under the leadership of one Harbhagat, styled as, *Niranjanias*. They constructed a fake Golden Temple and tank, prepared

an apocryphal *Janamsakhi* of Guru Nanak, and proclaimed that the true destiny of Sikhism was to act as a catalyst for converting ever increasing larger numbers of Hindus to Islam so that India may be converted into a true *Dar-ul-Islam*, an Islamic State and Society. About these Sikhs, the contemporary Muslim writers state that they even practised circumcision and ritual muslim prayers and fasting. Our ancestors, confronted with this mortal challenge, resolved that the first priority was to destroy these *Hindalias* root and branch and to settle with the Mughal and Pathan empires later on.

7. This in short, is where we stand to-day. It is in this background and context that the Shiromani Akali Dal passed its famous resolution of the 20th July, 1966, at Delhi, demanding *inter-alia*, that (1) the newly carved-out Punjab should be so enlarged as to include in it all the left-out Panjabi areas and establishments, such as, Bhakra Dam, Ganga Nagar District of Rajasthan, Sirsa Tehsil of Hissar District, Ambala Tehsil of Ambala District, and the Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, with certain areas of Karnal District, such as Shahbad, and Rattia Block. (2) For making constitutional arrangements that recognise this enlarged Punjab as the Sikh Homeland and which confer upon it the powers and status of Jammu & Kashmir, as laid down in the un-amended Constitution Act of 1950. This resolution further demanded that this Sikh Homeland should be recognised as an integral part of the Union of India, and internally governed by a Constitution framed on modern democratic lines. It was further demanded in the resolution that political arrangements should be provided in the Constitution Act which guarantee effective representation of the Sikhs on legislative, judicial, and executive levels of Governments in the states other than the Punjab, to ensure that no discrimination can be practised against the Sikhs residing in those areas. It is this demand which has been mischievously misrepresented by a hostile Press as a separatist demand,

as a demand for a Sovereign Sikh State, and as a demand which is anti-national, anti-Indian, and inspired by the foreign enemies of India.

8. What is the real nature of the, so called, secular Indian Government, manipulated by a strong Centre, deriving its authority from a Parliament elected by a one-head-one-vote suffrage ? Anybody who has first-hand experience of how the Parliament functions, and to what invisible pulls and strains it is subjected continuously and effectively, knows that the Parliament in Delhi is an instrument, a true instrument, in the hands of those who think on the lines which determined the Hindu thought and action during the half a century before 1947. Whatever the pretensions and whatever the appearances, true realities of Indian *real politik* remain unaltered, and this is despite a large number of well-intentioned and patriotic Hindus, who cherish no illwill towards the Sikhs. Then, there is the Executive in the country which daily implements the laws made by this Parliament. This Executive is saturated with the same biases and attitudes that have moved the Hindu psyche through-out the centuries that they have remained overwhelmed by a militant, conquering Islam. This Hindu psyche is incapable of a correct interpretation of the new world and is profoundly persuaded that a strong and true India can arise only on the ashes of those who do not formally merge themselves into the omnivorous Hindu Society. This nostalgic aspiration is succinctly summed up in the cry of, "*Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan*". A country and a society where the Hindi that is the Sam-skrit-based *khadiboli*, is not the sole exclusive language of the Government, of diplomacy, of higher thought and culture, is a country and a society which is unacceptable to this Hindu psyche. A country or a society in India which is not composed of those adopting formal trappings of Hindu way of life, habits of food and dress, of idiom and thought, is totally unacceptable to them, and India, called by whatever name, must be an India, that is, Bharat, in which non-

Hindus may live but only on sufferance and as fringe citizens, even though their existence is guaranteed in a Constitution which is more modern than modernity, and which can be defended before any forum of enlightened West European intellectuals. Then, a Judicial system, which was established by the British in this country has been transplanted in new free India. This Judicial system has now remained as a transplant on the recipient body of the Hindu Society under a Hindu Government for almost two decades. People who understand these matters are profoundly disturbed at what they see in this Roman jurisprudence and British justice transplanted on the alien soil of India. There are two tests by which it may be judged as to whether the transplant has been rejected by the recipient or has been accepted as integral part of the Hindu psyche. Firstly, in any judicial process, the appeal of the aggrieved citizen, whether against the State or another fellow citizen, is an appeal to God, and not to a political party or a permanent majority in a nation. If those making judgments in judicial forums are not all the time, poignantly aware of this principle, then it follows that the foreign judicial system has not become an integral part of the nation's way of life. If there exists a special rapport between the judges and the political leaders, or the community to which they belong, then the judicial system, so transplanted, has not been accepted by the recipient body. Secondly, in all judicial pronouncements, the major influence is not fiat but principles which bind the judges and apply consistently among all men. If interpretation of law is different from man to man, and the legal relief to be allowed depends upon the face of the individual, and not upon the legal principles, then the inference is that, the transplant has been rejected by the recipient body. Those who have carefully watched this aspect of our national life, are not free from grave and serious apprehensions as to the future of the foreign judicial system in India. For the Sikhs it is a question of life and death, and it is for this reason that a resolution of

20th July, 1966, passed at Delhi by the Shiromani Akali Dal, has formally recorded its impression that so far as the Sikhs are concerned, the judicial process of the country cannot be implicitly relied upon for redress of grievances or protection against discrimination.

9. Apart from the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive, there is another power in the State, which is called, the Press, and allied means of mass-communication, such as, Radio and Television. These are either state monopolies, or virtual monopolies in the hands of members of the majority. There are not a few Sikhs, who are sorely grieved at the treatment meted out to them in this quarter through misrepresentation as well as through suppression of news.

10. Recently, after much unseemly excitement, the Official Languages Bill has been enacted in our Parliament and the ruling Akalis, in accordance with the programme of their Akali Dal, have accepted Hindi, in advance, as the sole link-language of the Union. As already said, Hindi is not a mere language; it is more a symbol and banner of the parochial Hindu psyche that brooks neither rivals nor co-existence. From purely Sikh point of view, Hindi's supremacy in the state affairs is culturally undesirable, administratively disastrous and politically disintegrating. Hindi is a reaction against all that Sikhism basically stands for, and communal tolerance and administrative efficiency are bound to be the first casualties in the process of establishing primacy of Hindi in India, not even familiar to those who claim to speak it. It is bound to de-link us from the modern technological progress, constrict our mental horizon and otherwise isolate us from that which is universal and forward-looking. Just as **Guru** Gobind Singh enjoined upon the Sikhs to attain proficiency in Sanskrit in order to identify themselves with the cultural mores of India, and to study Persian for understanding the central Asian thought and mastering skills in international

diplomacy of the day, for precisely these reasons, I am persuaded, that the Sikhs must learn English language, which is going to be the language of international Sikhism as a world-religion and which is the language of modern technology and higher world-culture. The Sikhs must put their weight on the side of those who advocate retention of English as the link language of India.

11. In short, it is plain to any honest and intelligent Sikh that unless the situation changes fundamentally, and suitable arrangements are made to ensure Sikhs a proper existence and proper future in India, the Sikhs are bound to be first pushed out of the main stream of Indian history, and then made to disappear from the historical scene, altogether.

12. To such a predicament no self-respecting Sikh can submit, whatever the odds and whatever the consequences for spelling out this position aloud. The Sikhs are History-makers and they are determined to remain so, no matter what the others have planned for them. The Sikhs are a living people knit into a political organisation, the Khalsa, and they have no intention of going under simply because these others view the current situation and realities otherwise. The Sikhs shall make the greatest mistake of their life if they accept the position of becoming mere camp-followers of those who made the division of indivisible India a possibility, and those who proclaim that a nation can be artificially manufactured out of half-baked theories extracted from the 19th century history of Western Europe. A nation does not spring forth from the earth as a mushroom after a rain. It must struggle as a banyan tree against wintry winds and dry spells. A nation is not produced out of the corpses of living and pulsating organisms and a nation is not built through intellectual arrogance and spinnery. The Khalsa cannot lend itself to be used in a self-defeating process of this kind. The Khalsa shall never accept or submit to the position that technology, with its

attitudes and values, is a sufficient culture or that pre-occupation with industrial production and economic goals can satisfy all humane dimensions of life and can replace religion as the supreme concern of man. The Khalsa shall uphold the banner of Dharma, the banner of Freedom for every body, the banner of establishing tolerant, plural societies and the banner of peace and mutual understanding among men, so that the entire mankind may progress and prosper.

13. For achievements of these goals, the Gurus and our ancestors have already laid down the political programme for the Sikh people. This political programme, we repeat every morning and evening in our congregations :—

ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਵਤਹ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੈਕਾਰ, ਖਾਲਸੇ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲਬਾਲੇ

“May the mankind progress on the road to recurring victories and ever-expanding affluence. May the Sikhs remain free and sovereign. May the Righteousness prevail every where and evermore. May the Panth be respected and recognised amongst the nations of the world.” There is no other Sikh programme.

✓14. In the light of these observations, I say that, the destiny of the Sikhs in India is to procure an autonomous Sikh Homeland within Indian Union, so as to be able to make their full contribution in the interests of integrity of the country and unity of the nation. In the event, however, of circumstances so changing as to require it, it is the destiny of the Sikhs to take up the task of reconstruction of India, where it was left in the first half of the 19th century. In full awareness of this destiny, let the Sikhs unite and march forward with a firm resolve to fight, enshrined in their hearts and the Name of God in their lips :

ਪੈਨ ਜੀਓ ਤਿਹ ਕੇ ਜਗ ਮੈਂ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਤ ਮੈਂ ਜੁੱਧ ਬੀਚ ਹੇ ॥

Waheguruji ka Khalsa, Waheguruji ki Fateh.



PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

of

S. Kapur Singh Ex. M. P.

*on the occasion of Annual Session of All India
Sikh Students Federation, held at Chandigarh.*

The Young Khalsa,

It is indeed, a privilege to be with you and to address you from the eminent position to which you have so generously exalted me to-day.

2. It is a privilege, for, the not-so-young people who have ideas to give, have always longed for company of the young, knowing them to be the most fertile field for ideas, noble and true. It is also a privilege, because, the ideas I have to convey are precisely such as are specially significant for the young Sikhs.

3. There is a prophesy, in the *Sausakhi* attributed to **Guru** Gobind Singh, which says :

“When the Ferangi, foreigners quit India, this shall be an opportunity for the Khalsa youth to rise and make their imprint on History”. A prophesy can be as often true and genuine as apocryphal and misleading, but mostly, such prophesies represent collective urges and aspirations, dreams and hopes of a people intensely sensitive about their destiny or seized by sharp sense of urgency about their existence: In this sense, this particular prophesy, whatever its origin cannot but evoke genuine response in the hearts of young Sikhs.

4. When I was as young as you are, the question worried me a great deal as to what was this Order of the Khalsa, which **Guru** Gobind Singh had instituted in the year 1699 A.D. Many were the replies made, and many the answers I read from the books. I was told, it was merely the perfection of religion founded

by [redacted] Nanak. It was said that it was a temporary band of fighters raised by the [redacted] to meet requirements of the times. It was explained that it was merely an attempt to separate the Sikhs into a new and distinct community. I was not satisfied with these answers and explanations, precisely because what [redacted] Gobind Singh says about the Order of the Khalsa is something fundamentally different from what the sacred writings in the [redacted] say about a Sikh. Throughout [redacted] *Granth*, a Sikh is conceived as an individual, passionately interested in religion and righteousness, and trying to follow the way of life taught by the Gurus. His relation to the [redacted] is that of a disciple to his teacher, and that of the servant to his spiritual master. But [redacted] Gobind Singh speaks of the Khalsa as his Ideal, Dream, his Divinity and his Aspirations, his Support and his Destiny. Surely, [redacted] Gobind Singh, in these utterances, is not referring to a religion or to a band of disciples, to his followers and to his fighting comrades. It was about twenty five years ago that, it struck me that [redacted] Gobind Singh had tried to found a Society, for which there exists no parallel in the history of mankind, in as much as, this Society was charged with the task of not only maintaining, what was called, *Dharma*—permanent, unalterable, valid for all time, affecting all aspects of human life and totalitarian in its effects, but he was also charging them with bringing about social and political conditions wherein this *Dharma* becomes a natural state of affairs with men. This *Dharma* of [redacted] Gobind Singh is not merely regulative and universal, but also is surcharged with revolutionary dynamism, an echo of which was heard in the world, about sixty years after the institution of the Order of the Khalsa, when Marx and Engels in the documents of the International Working Men's Association, laid down the task of waging "the struggle for simple laws of ethics and justice which ought to govern the relations of private individuals as the para-

mount rules of intercourse between nations". Assuming a status of sovereignty for themselves, and achieving political power as a means for making this *Dharma* prevail, seemed to be the main task set before this Society. Nothing like this had ever happened in the history of mankind before, until Lenin founded his Communist Party in Russia, in the year 1917. Lenin claimed that his Party was a unique institution in the History of mankind, but it was left to the famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, to say in 1952, which supported the idea I had already expressed in print, that Lenin was mistaken in his claim of uniqueness for his Party and that, "the Hindu Khalsa of *Guru* Gobind Singh" was the true prototype of Lenin's Party.

5. Such is the Order of the Khalsa which *Guru* Gobind Singh founded. A Sikh who takes the baptismal vows of the Khalsa must, thenceforth, refuse to accept the status reserved for a subject, throughout the thousands of years of Indian history and in many other nations, namely, that of an individual who has no rights against the ruling power such as can be legally or institutionally enforced. A member of the Khalsa is a sovereign citizen by his birth-right, and subjugation and slavery is antagonistic to his status as a member of the Order of the Khalsa. It is in this sense that Rattan Singh Bhangoo in his, *Prachin Panth-prakash*, says about a member of the Khalsa that,

"He neither cringes nor submits before a mortal.
He either is a rebel or a sovereign man."

This was merely a restatement of implications of what *Guru* Nanak had said, that, "blind with superstition and grossly ingorant men they are who cringe and submit before tyranny, like lifeless corpses."

6. It is this Khalsa which was to be a State, contrary to the prevailing concepts of State whether in Asia or in Europe, without a fixed territory, without a subject population, a sovereign with its internal organisa-

tion as its government. It is a mistaken idea that the Khalsa declared itself a State only, after the Mughal Government continued persecuting them, in the second quarter of the 18th century. That Khalsa is a State has been the position from the very beginning, from the times of **Guru** Gobind Singh himself, who did not care to occupy a conquered territory and yet claimed a sovereign status for himself and his Khalsa in relation to every one who might come in contact with them. This was the real cause of trouble with the hill-chieftains. It was on this point, precisely, with the parleys of **Guru** Gobind Singh broke with Emperor Bahadur Shah. When in 1733 A.D., the Mughal Government made the Khalsa a grant of a hundred thousand rupees, per annum with the letters-patent of the *Nawab*, the Khalsa condescended to accept this arrangement with the express reservation, that "the Khalsa, made to rule freely, cannot accept permanently a subordinate position". (Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Orient Longmans, page 121).

7. The entire history of the Sikhs, since the dawn of the 18th century till 1947, can be understood correctly and truly only if this doctrinal position of the Khalsa, which has formulated their impulses, is properly understood and kept in view.

8. In 1947, before quitting India, the Britishers made genuine efforts to make some settlement, whereby the Sikhs might realise their true political status, such as accords with the birth-right of a sovereign Khalsa, in the changed circumstances. Into this story of missed opportunities and broken pledges, such as has brought the Sikhs to their current deplorable position, I do not intend to go. Those interested might refer to the Speech which I made in the Lok Sabha, on the 6th September, 1966, while opening the Debate on the Punjab Reorganisation Bill, 1966.

9. The position at the moment is, that a Punjabi state has been formed where in the Sikhs are in a precari-

ous majority such as might be made to escalate into a minority at the next Census-operations. In this Punjabi state, a situation has been created wherein the political organisation of the Sikhs, the Shiromani Akali Dal, has split into groups and wherein the more influential group has openly abandoned the position which constitutes the true goal and the true destiny of the Khalsa. The Sikh politics have been reduced to confine to the base of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, which also now is in the hands of those who do not seem to be very particular about the true doctrinal position of the Khalsa, or its goal and its destiny.

10. It is in this context that a heavy responsibility falls upon the younger section of the Khalsa, to hold the flag of **Guru** Gobind Singh aloft and to stand by the goal and the destiny determined by the **Guru** for the Khalsa.

11. Such a destiny and such a goal, in the current context, must comprise of three ingredients. One, within the frame-work of a free and United India, and in the context of one Indian Nation, fundamentally new political arrangements must be brought about that restore to the Khalsa the status of sovereignty which is their birth-right and their hall-mark. The present framework or the provisions of the Constitution Act need be no insurmountable difficulty, for, as Thomas Jafferson (1743-1826) said, "No society can make a perpetual constitution or even a perpetual law". Secondly, such arrangements must ensure that the territorial areas, mainly inhabited by the Sikhs and other such areas necessary for viability, are organised together into a single autonomous territory. Thirdly, these arrangements must ensure such political power to the Sikhs in their collectivity, that they can exercise it for preserving and propagating the deposit of Sikhism and the Sikh way of life, unhindered by impediments, inherent in the current political arrangements in the country.

12. It is to fulfill these requirements that, recently,

a demand has been formulated by the Sikhs, for achievement of the Sikh homeland, or the Sikhistan, within the Union of India. This Sikh homeland shall consist of the present Punjabi state with certain other contiguous areas added to it. This territorial state then must be vested with the right to frame its own internal constitution, in terms of the limitations that were envisaged in Article, 370 of the Constitution Act, in the year 1950, in relation to Jammu & Kashmir.

13. Such a Sikh homeland shall be an integral part of the Union of India, and the internal constitution of this part of India shall be framed on modern democratic lines, with the Fundamental Rights embodied in the Indian Constitution Act, remaining undisturbed. But it shall contain Directives of Policy, and other provisions, as are deemed necessary, to facilitate the preservation, and propagation of the deposit of Sikhism, of the Sikh way of life. It will not be a theocratic State wherein the Sikhs are the superior citizens and the others have to submit to some Sikh laws of divine origin. It will be governed by man-made ordinances, democratically formulated. It will not be a mere enlarged addition of the present Punjabi state, as some superficial critics seem to imagine, with only more powers from the Central List transferred to the State List. But it shall be internally autonomous, with its own constitution, with programmed directions to remove impediments in the way of free life and growth of Sikhism and the Sikh Society.

14. Such a goal is not only practicable, and capable of securing understanding and sympathy from the enlightened world public opinion, but it is also consistent with the modern trends of Indian thought, and it can be realised within the context of the basic foundations that sustain the Indian Union. Such a destiny beckons the Sikhs constantly and urgently, in view of the developments that are taking place all around. In India itself, historical urges of a regional character are fast forming into hard realities, and

intelligent eyes can see the day when they shall become the main elements of the political constitution of India. In the outside world, as in India itself, powerful and vast ideological forces, in the most dangerous form of quasi-religions, communism and militant Hindu fascism, are struggling for loyalties of men, and they constitute a real danger to the deposit of Sikhism and the Sikh way of life. Whatever the other parts of India might choose to accept as desirable or inevitable, the Khalsa must take precautions against a situation which can irretrievably push them into a struggle for their very life, unprepared and unequipped.

15. Many are the trivial objections raised against these demands of the Sikh people. Most of them arise out of intellectual arrogance, and some out of calculated malice, but some are based on ignorance also. No matter what the difficulties, and what the obstacles, the Sikhs have to take a decision, now or never. The question is, to be or not to be. There cannot be two replies to such a question.

16. What shall the Sikh youngmen do to help the cause of the Panth, thus stated ?

17. I think, that the immediate task before them is twofold. To organise themselves so as to bring as many youngmen and women of the Khalsa, as can be, under this organisation of the Sikh Students' Federation. Secondly, to make these youngmen and women intensely conscious and aware of the problem that faces us, through self-study and examination, through coming together and through dialogues and seminars. All else, will follow.

18. At the moment, since India achieved freedom from the British Rule, the historical urges of various elements of the country have assumed the form of quarrels about and over languages. It is, therefore, only proper that I say a few words about this problem of languages also, in so far as it is relevant to the main problem of the Sikhs as I have formulated already.

19. Let us be all clear in our minds that the quarrels about languages in India are not the quarrels about the media of education, or the language of administration. This is a quarrel about cultural dominance and a quarrel about political primacy in the country. This is the real truth and all else is eye-wash. Punjabi language has fortuitously come to be associated with the Sikhs. But the Punjabi language has very little to do with the deposit of Sikhism or with the destiny of the Sikhs. The unilingual Punjabi state was demanded by the Sikhs not because they considered any particular language as necessary for their spiritual survival or cultural viability, but because they wanted to employ a fashionable political idiom to salvage their identity and to realise their destiny. To say that, since Punjabi has now become the state language of the Punjab, the Sikh people have neither any political programme left nor any further goals to achieve, is the high water-mark of political trickery or stupidity or both. To say that, Hindi was the favourite language of the Gurus or that, it is necessary or helpful for understanding the Sikh scriptures is to display gross ignorance or high hypocrisy. Hindi is not a language in the accepted sense of the term ; it is more a weapon forged by a certain class of Hindu politicians who dream of establishing a single cultural pattern in the entire country. The question before the Sikhs is to see as to whether they can fit into this pattern without damage to their own integrity and their chances of free growth. It is my considered and dispassionate opinion that acceptance of Hindi as the language of administration or of culture, is not exactly in the interest of the aspirations which the Sikh people cherish. Likewise, I am firmly persuaded that, the Sikhs must support the cause of English language in the educational and cultural life of India. Firstly, English language has now become the dominant language of scientific and cultural thought, throughout the world. According to a recent estimation by the U.N.O., over sixty per cent of significant publications of the world

are published in English every year. It is the imperative injunction of **Guru** Gobind Singh that, the Sikhs must keep in touch with the latest and the most progressive spiritual and secular thought of mankind. In the little *Prashanotri* of **Guru** Gobind Singh, it is laid down :—

“As far as the teachings of Sikh religion are concerned, the Sikhs should go and learn them from the Sikhs qualified to impart such knowledge. As for the other religious and secular knowledge of the world is concerned, it is the duty of a Sikh to learn all useful and true knowledge from where-ever and from what-ever source, it is available.”

20. It was for this reason that, **Guru** Gobind Singh had called upon the Sikhs to master the ancient Sanskrit language so that the Sikhs might truly inherit the cultural heritage of their ancestors. It was for this reason that he called upon the Sikhs to learn the Persian and Arabic languages so as to remain in touch with the cultural trends and diplomatic arts of Central Asia which determined the fates of India during those days.

21. For precisely these reasons, I exhort the Sikh youngmen not to make the mistake of thinking that their religion or their destiny is tied up with the Punjabi language. It is for this reason that, I ask you to uphold the cause of English in the cultural and administrative life of India, for which there is a particular and additional reason also. Sikhism is not a religion meant for a particular country, age or a people. It is a universal religion. It was an explicit injunction of **Guru** Arjun, when he compiled the *Adi Granth* that, it should be immediately translated into all the languages of the world, so that the entire mankind may benefit by its contents. During the last five hundred years we have not been able to make much headway in realising the destiny of Sikhism as a world-religion. But now, changes are taking place in the

entire world which will inevitably turn the minds of men towards religious insights, for comfort, and solace, for strength and hope. Sikhism must perpare itself for that day. When *Mahayan* form of Buddhism was formulated to suit international temper and requirements, the original, sacred language of Buddhism, *Pali*, was given up infavour of *Sanskrit*. Now, Sikh colonies have already grown up in distant parts of the East and West, particularly, in Malayasia and in Great Britain. These can well be the focal points from which a universal Sikhism can go forth. For this Sikhism, as a world religion, English language will be the most useful and indispensable tool.

22. Lastly, I exhort that, in so far as the Sikh educational institutions are concerned, in India or abroad, the study of Persian and Arabic should invariably be encouraged there, so as to keep the Sikh religious temper not only in touch with Islam as it impinged upon it historically, but also with the latest cultural thought of Semitic and Muslim Asia.

23. With these words I conclude.

24. *Waheguruji ka Khalsa, Waheguruji ki fateh.*

AWAKE ! YOUNG KHALSA

Kapur Singh

Speech made by Sirdar Kapur Singh, Ex-M.P. at the Annual Meeting of the All India Sikh Students' Association on the 23rd August, 1968 at Gandhi Bhavan, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Mr. President, the Young Khalsa,

THROUGHOUT the ages, it has been conceded that the future belongs to the young, but never, so far, that the present belongs to the young.

It is a new phenomenon in the history of civilisation that the young have forcibly and vehemently staked the claim that they are the masters of the present and that they are justified in repudiating the leadership and claim to infallibility of the old men of the present and the authority of the past generations of old men from which the old men of the present generation derive their claim to guide the young.

The young men everywhere, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa and in the Americas, are dissatisfied with the ways of the old men. They are openly skeptical about the wisdom of the old men and are impatient with all forms of authority that demands unquestioning obedience. They are angry youngmen.

Beatles and Hippies

What do they want ? They do not seem to know exactly. But they are very angry. Their anger has led them into strange bye-paths. There are these "beatles", their creed is revolt, disorder, chaos, especially activity that has no meaning. This they think, is the road to freedom, a breakaway from the values and institutions of the past—the "ratrace", as they call it and they think that out of repudiation

and negation, a new world will be born in which there is neither discord nor tension, neither hypocrisy nor falsehood. Then there are these "hippies", a special sect of the "beatles" who believe that the road to a new garden, where there is eternal sunshine and ever-blooming flower-season, is blocked by the limitations of the normal mind. To break through and transcend these limitations they take to, what are called, mind-expanding drugs, *marijuana*, *L.S.D.* *hashish*, alcohol and *bhang*. None has, so far returned from these footpaths to report the discovery of a new garden of Eden, though many have perished in body and before our very eyes.

Students Unrest

Recently, the entire student community of the ancient University of Sorbonne in France, suddenly staged an unprecedented revolt that threw the whole country and its Government into a turmoil. It all began, in the month of last May, with the students' strike and their protest demonstrations. The students were dissatisfied with their courses of studies with the methods of teaching and with the administration of educational faculties in the University. They not only refused to attend classes, but they turned out teachers and other functionaries, and occupied lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries and other buildings. They began to march up and down the boulevards of Paris which brought them in conflict with the police. The police, as they often do, used excessive force in breaking up students' meetings and demonstrations, that led to pitched battles between the students and the police. Barricades were put up by the students in the streets, more particularly in the Latin Quarter. The protest soon turned into revolt in which the whole nation seemed to join. The students issued a call to industrial workers to join in their attempt to overthrow the established order. Within a couple of days, there was a general strike bringing all production and services to a dead stop. Nearly a crore of workers

joined this revolt of the students and the strikers in many places, took possession of their places of work. According to the famous views and news weekly, *Time*, "General De Gaulle saw his government crumbling beneath him, Paris hostile and ready to explode and opposition politicians closing ranks to cut him down."

It is not my purpose, here, to analyse the causes of this phenomenon in France or to trace its history. I have merely outlined its extent and magnitude to indicate the temper and stirrings of the modern young students elsewhere.

What was the nature of these stirrings ? The Paris correspondent of the *Weekend Review*, has stated that according to the students,

"the University is no more than a tool to mould new managers which capitalism requires to continue the oppression of the working classes".

What they wanted was, stated the correspondent, "a permanent confrontation, albeit intellectual, between existing institutions and successive younger generations. They purposely refrain from stating their demands in concrete forms, in the belief that what is needed is not the replacement of old institutions and principles by new ones, but a permanent awareness of the futility of dogmatism."

This students' strike did not last long. Along with the strike of workers, the students' revolt also subsided after four or five weeks' duration, after leaving for their contemporaries and the posterity a saga of noble impulses and heroic deeds.

Analytic Study of Unrest

I have narrated this story before you, the Sikh Students, with a purpose. It has implications, such as might provide guidelines for the All India Sikh Students' Association. Firstly, in common with the youth movements, throughout the world, in the last

three decades or so, this students' revolt has underlined the basic dissatisfaction of the young with the ways of the older generations. Secondly, it has asserted the fundamental right of the young to participate, through revolutionary activity, to demolish and replace institutions and ideas. Lastly, it represents a yearning and demand by the young for their right to be equipped for the modern life.

Guidelines for Sikh Youth

Did [redacted] Gobind Singh foresee these world-wide developments when he said that,

“After the Britishers quit India, the young Khalsa shall arise to keep its tryst with Destiny.”¹

Here are then the guidelines for you, the All India Sikh Students' Association, and the young Khalsa, provided by the prophecy of the [redacted] and the mysterious and powerful stirrings that are moving the generation of the young, today, and these guidelines indicate that the young Sikh students, men and women, must join together, without fear and freeing themselves from all duress, to transform themselves into, what the Rider of the Blue Horse intended them to be :

“The sword in the Hand of God, and a fit instrument of the Divine Will”

*khalsa akalpurkh ki phauj,
khalsa pargatio parmatma ki mauj.*

Secondly, these guidelines indicate that the Young Khalsa now must actively undertake to deliver the Sikh masses from the slavery of spiritual charlatans, called the *sants* and the Sikh *Panth* from the ruinous leadership of incompetent *thugs* and uneducated hooligans, called, the *jathedars*.

Thirdly and lastly, they must come forward to take up and hold aloft the abandoned flag of [redacted] Gobind Singh under which the Khalsa must secure for itself a just and rightful place within a united India and an integrated Indian nation, for the Sikh people

¹ des chad jab jahin farangi tab gajainge mori bhujangi.

in the form of a constitutionally recognised Sikh Homeland wherein the Sikhs can encourage and preserve the Sikh way of life through the social pattern of a political community and the ideology of a State. In such a State we shall be able to ban public smoking in the interests of national health, and penalise apostasy, back-sliding and other forms of decay in human character, through legislative measures, particularly in so far as it affects public civil services and military personnel, in the interest of national character.

In such a State alone can we mould and regulate the educational processes and institutions to foster and strengthen the life-giving impulses of Sikhism in the interests of a regenerated India as a world-power.

Such a State alone can halt the process of disintegration of the collective Soul of the Khalsa, set into motion by the Constitution Act of 1950, with its overtones of secularism.

Such a State is necessary for actively containing and halting the corroding influences of ideologies that stalk this sacred land of India in the guise of Socialism and Communism, about which the most penetrating minds of the first half of the 20th century, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, have declared that they are a deadly prelude to atheism and materialism, that cannot but degrade the human character and debase the human soul, in the end.

Sikh Homeland in Interest of India

The immediate establishment of such a State—the Sikh Homeland—is in the best interests of India and is the need of the hour. To strive for its achievement is the prerogative and duty of the Young Khalsa, including the All India Sikh Students' Association. It is not only to the loyalty and duty of the Young Khalsa that I appeal in this behalf, it is also, it is first, it is above all, the national interests of a united Indian nation and an integrated country that I have in view in making this appeal.

Dangers to Community and The Country

Then there is another aspect of the matter that I have in view in making this appeal. Deliberate and persistent efforts are being made to disintegrate and dissolve the Khalsa ever since the country has gained freedom. Under the disguise of democracy, secularism and theory of one-nation subtle schemes and policies are being adopted with the aim of first disintegrating the Khalsa into individual Sikhs and then debasing the individual Sikhs into secular citizens so that they make good cannon fodder, good *chowkidars* of banks and business establishments owned by others and good chauffeurs for expensive limousines of industrial magnates of a united Indian nation and thus they are deprived of their history-making potency and dynamism. To reduce the Royal Khalsa of ~~Guru~~ Gobind Singh into the secular proletariat of hewers of wood and drawers of water for the traditional higher classes of Hindus and the new privileged class of a free India, is the greatest betrayal of trust created by the sacrifices of those, who have, throughout the ages, toiled and suffered and sacrificed for freedom of *Dharma*, that is India, that is, Bharat. This evil design must be frustrated by the Young Khalsa.

In educational texts and policies, they are injecting anti-Sikh virus.

In the public services they are creating an atmosphere hostile to the self-respect, integrity and cohesiveness of the Khalsa.

✓ In the fighting forces of the country they are reducing the *Singhs*, the lions of ~~Guru~~ Gobind Singh, into shaven and shorn slaves of a godless centre of power and command and everywhere and in every way it is sought to devalue the Sikhs and its visible apotheosis and ideal, the Khalsa. ✓

Those now in power, do not seem to realise that thus they are reducing the Sikh people to a condition of rootlessness and individual irresponsibility, such as

can only add to the gangs of smugglers, communists, and anti-social forces. Unless they are extricated from this morass through establishment of the Sikh Homeland or Sikhistan where they are enabled to salvage their identity, the Sikhs are bound to become a danger to others in their desperate efforts to find meaning and purpose through whatever comes to hand, communism, nihilism, bizzarre religions, or far-out protest movements. They will become a hazard to everyone, more so to those who now assiduously plan to disintegrate and dissolve them. Back of the Sikh Society, behind their energy and productive capacity, at the root of their deathless courage and undying loyalty to high causes, there is something as powerful as it is intangible. This power is a set of ideas and altitudes and convictions and the confidence that these ideas and altitudes and convictions are viable. If they are forced to the belief that it is not so they will erupt, before they shed off their panoply of history-making power and darkness is made to gather around the Khalsa. They will not be transformed into plant tools of the Hindu privilgentia, as is hoped.

The cohesiveness of the Sikh Society, the commitment of a large number of Sikhs to the ideals of the Khalsa to live together, to work together and to aspire together is a fairly mysterious thing and the modern Hindu and the present rulers of India do not know what makes it happen. Once the Khalsa is made to pull apart no one will ever know how to go about repairing it.

Gobind Singhs are not born every day and the consequences to India, to Hinduism and to Hindu society and to the world indirectly, will be terrible and grievous. For this reason, the Sikh Homeland demand, made recently by the Shiromani Akali Dal, must be immediately conceded.

Gurdwaras in Sikh Homeland

Look at the Sikh *gurdwaras* and their statutory management through popularly elected Shiromani

Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. The historical Sikh *gurdwaras* are essentially monuments of national importance in so far as they memorialise incidents and sacrifices made to re-establish *dharma* in the North Western India from where it had all but vanished for nearly a millennium. In a truly nationalist State, maintenance, upkeep and financing their proper functions should be a charge on the public exchequer in the interests of public policy. The non-historical Sikh *gurdwaras* must be so managed through State statutes as to make them true community-centres of higher culture. But what is the position today ? They are in the hands of persons who know little of Sikhism and careless, who have corrupted these sacred places into dens of vice and focii of corruption and who have made them strongholds of a godless politics and materialist outlook on life. They are now virtually a cancerous growth in Sikhism and sources of poisonous infection to the health of society. This grave malady could be cured only if the Sikh Homeland or Sikhistan is conceded and established. And unless this malady is cured, it continues as a grave danger to the nation and the country.

Such is the forbidding task that beckons Youth Sikh men and women to an activity inspired by pure altruism and high idealism. Such a task cannot be accomplished by ill-informed and timid minds nor through factionalism or narrow-mindedness. Through high resolve, deep dedication and undying sense of unity of purpose alone can such great task be tackled.

Men and women of the All India Sikh Students Association, combat-ready and on constant alert, *tiar-bar-tiar*, march forward with unity in steps and hearts, holding aloft skyhigh the golden banner of the Lord of the White Hawk, so that the Khalsa may regain its rightful position in a strong united and resurgent India as a world power, which is its and her true destiny.

Waheguruji Ka Khalsa Waheguruji Ki Fatch.

English Translation of para, "The political Goal of the Panth", contained in the Merger Agreement of the two wings of the Shiromani Akali Dal dated 8th October, 1968.¹

POLITICAL GOAL OF THE PANTH

The Political objective of the Panth, well grounded in the commandments of Guru Gobind Singh and concretely shaped by the Sikh History, is World-famous and well known.

Its exege-sis, in the current political situation is hereby affirmed in the following terms :—

"The Order of the Khalsa, as ordained by Guru Gobind Singh and in accordance with His Commandments is a sovereign People by birthright and a sovereignty-oriented Party *suigeneris*. The political goal of the Khalsa Panth, as publicly inscribed on a gate of the Golden Temple in the Formula, "All decision making powers to the Khalsa", is known throughout the world. A sovereign Sikh People, within a free country, to achieve this goal within a free India, as the birthright of the Khalsa to be established within the framework of a well demarcated territory, enjoying a constitutional autonomous status, is the very foundation of the organisation and Constitution of the Shiromani Akali Dal."

¹ This Merger Document is published by authority, on pages 81-84 of the Gurdwara Gazette, November, 1968 which Gazette is issued monthly under the Statutory requirements of the Punjab Gurdwara Act.



SIKHS' POLITICAL GOAL IS

'DIVINELY FIXED'

"The political goal as restated by the Shromani Akali Dal the organization formed after the merger of the Sant's Dal and the Master's) does not repudiate either explicitly or implicitly the substance of the Ludhiana resolution called the "Sikh homeland resolution" which was later incorporated in the manifesto of the Master Tara Singh Akali Dal.

This declaration was made today by Mr. Kapur Singh, Senior Vice-President of the Shromani Akali Dal and the second in command only to the Sant, the supreme leader in the new Akali hierarchy.

Answering questions, Mr. Kapur Singh, declined to go beyond this and made a categorical statement that the 'political goal' did by implication pin-point that this has been agitating the minds of Punjab politicians since its phraseology has been set in intriguing and equivocal terms. The consensus is that the homeland demand can be read very much into the language of the political goal statement.

He added that the "political goal" statement need not make a specific reference to the homeland demand. Its task is to enunciate in "broad, general terms the contours of the political objective of the Sikhs which has always been there. If you read into the text of the merger document, the political goal of the Sikhs has been divinely fixed by Guru Gobind Singh, and its form and content only might change according to changing circumstances. We have now defined the political goal in terms of the existing political situation in India."

EX-I.C.S., EX-M.P.

Interestingly, it is Mr. Kapur Singh, formerly of the I.C.S. and a former member of Parliament, who drafted the postulates and the "political goal" statement of the Dal as the basis of the merger agreement of the Sant and Master groups of Akalis. Mr. Kapur Singh was also the author of the Master Tara Singh Dal manifesto for the 1967 General Election which forms the back-ground to the newly defined political goal and it is he who, as the prominent Sikh intellectual of the Master Akali Dal, had carried on the merger negotiations with the Sant.

In an interview, Mr. Kapur Singh said "there is nothing frightening in the political goal statement, nothing new and nothing inimical to the national interests. There is nothing in it to disturb the "already not too profound" sleep of the Congress rulers."

Asked if the new "political goal" indicated that the homeland demand had been given up, Mr. Kapur Singh replied, "It does not say it has been given up. Why should the political goal statement make a reference to it ?

In this statement, a new interpretation has been given to the divinely fixed goal of the Khalsa Panth and that interpretation has been accepted by the Shromani Akali Dal, the essence of which is that the Sikhs are sui generis, a free and sovereign people and this right is inalienable and cannot be compromised. The concrete realization of this status of the Sikh people is possible within the sovereign and territorial integrity of India, India being the matrix of the clan which vivifies the political aspirations of the Sikh people."

Mr. Kapur Singh went on to propound that in such countries as the UAR and the USA there were "many nations brought together in one free, sovereign country" and "in the Constitution of India it should be possible to reconcile the sui generis status of the

Sikhs within a sovereign, united India. It cannot be beyond the ingenuity of the political thinkers and constitutional experts to devise a framework in which this sui generis right of the Sikh people as well as the integrity of the country and the indivisibility of the nation is reconciled."

Mr. Kapur Singh asked , "Is it necessary to becloud the issues and malign the Sikhs simply because they are trying to salvage their identity which has been mercilessly thrown into the sand of the sea of secular India by purblind and egotistic Congress leaders."

AN OLD SLOGAN

Asked to comment on the phrase "azad desh" "azad Panth" in the political goal. Mr. Kapur Singh said this had been the objective of the Akali Dal since its inception in 1923 and had been put down in its constitution and had formed its slogan for more than a quarter of a century.

What Mr. Kapur Singh had to say about the United Front was equally interesting. The United Front of all non-Congress parties and some independents was formed after the last General Election with Mr. Gurnam Singh, the then Chief Minister, as its leader .

Mr. Kapur Singh , "Where is the United Front today ? It is disintegrated and disbanded. Technically, it does not exist today after the political changes." He called Mr. Gurnam Singh a self-styled leader of the United Front.

He said he was not pronouncing judgment as senior Vice-President of the Akali Dal (the Dal is meeting on October 26 to discuss the issue), but " as a citizen of Punjab, I can say that the Akali Dal will fight elections on its own tickets and manifesto and it will have political alliance and adjustments. Even if it could do so on its own, it would not usurp Govern-

ment for itself alone". Answering a question, he said the Akali Dal would be most happy to have the Jana Sangh as an ally because "it will be good for the State. It will cement Hindu-Sikh relationship which is of immense importance."



Akali Dal Committed To Homeland Demand

KAPUR SINGH

Mr. Kapur Singh, Senior Vice-President of the Akali Dal, today asserted that the two Akali Dals had agreed to press the demand for a Sikh homeland.

Addressing a meeting of the Ludhiana unit of the All-India Sikh Students' Federation, Mr. Kapur Singh said that the two Akali Dals were merged on the understanding that they would unitedly fight for the achievement of an independent political status for the "Sikh Panth."

He said it was our birth right to demand a homeland for the Sikhs.

He said the proposed Sikh homeland would consist of the present Punjabi-speaking State, Punjabi-speaking areas left out of Punjab, Chandigarh, Bhakra-Nangal and Ganganagar in Rajasthan.

He said he was pressing his demand because religion in India was not safe now. The Naxalites, who did not believe in God, were now active in West Bengal and Kerala. In the projected Sikh homeland religion would be fully protected, he added.

Mr. Kapur Singh declared that they would have their own Constitution in the Sikh homeland. He said the present Constitution was not according to their wishes and they had accepted it only because of moral pressure.

He said that at the time of the framing of India's Constitution the Sikhs' representatives, namely Mr. Hukam Singh and Mr. Bhupinder Singh, had refused to sign it.

Mr. Kapur Singh said that Defence, Finance and Foreign Affairs would be under the Union Government and all other internal matters would be dealt with by the State (homeland) Government.

He demanded that they be given the powers and rights given to Jammu and Kashmir in 1953.

Referring to Hindu-Sikh unity, Mr. Kapur Singh said that Hindus and Sikhs were inseparable and some people were trying to give a wrong interpretation to his demand.

'Sikh homeland' demand poses grave threat to Akali unity

The demand for a Sikh homeland, revived with vigour by Akali Dal Senior Vice-President Kapur Singh (ex ICS), threatens to end the six-month-old Akali unity.

Mr. Kapur Singh is firmly repeating, more than once daily, "the immediate establishment of a Sikh homeland, based on religion, is the need of the hour" despite categorical declaration of the Akali Dal Working Committee "the demand for a Sikh homeland is not a programme of the Akali Dal."

Dal President Sant Fateh Singh, Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, President Sant Chanan Singh and Akali Chief Minister Gurnam Singh have disowned and denounced the demand in unequivocal terms.

Mr. Kapur Singh, however, asserts that the Dal is committed to support, promote and propagate the "Sikh homeland" demand under a definite clause of the unity pact that had integrated the two Akali Dals—the Sant group and the Master bloc—in October last.

NOT SECESSIONISTS

Mr. Kapur Singh, who has a good number of admirers among the Sikh youth for various reasons, holds that his is not a secessionist demand. Let somebody prove its secessionist character and "I will give it up," he challenges.

Numerous Press reports about Mr. Kapur Singh's views being published daily with headlines in flaming words, by the provincial Press have generated a serious controversy and confusion pregnant with serious con-

sequences, including a serious threat to Hindu-Sikh amity.

In a bid to get a clear picture of Mr. Kapur Singh's mind, this correspondent asked him :

Question: What would be the basic content of the proposed Sikh homeland in definite terms ?

Answer: The Sikhs are entitled to and they demand a constitutionally-recognized homeland, within a united India and an integrated Indian nation, wherein they can encourage and preserve the Sikh way of life, through the social pattern of a political community and ideology of a State.

SUPERIOR CITIZENSHIP

The Sikhs will not enjoy the rights of a superior citizenship and the political decisions will not be taken through extra-democratic processes in such a State. It will not be a State where tendencies of separatism or such as are injurious to the integrity of India or the unity of the nation are fostered.

It will not be a mere enlarged edition of the present Punjabi State, as some superficial critics seem to imagine, with only more powers from the Central List transferred to the State List. But it shall be internally autonomous, with its own constitution, having programmed directions laid down so as to remove impediments in the way of free life and growth of Sikhism and Sikh society.

The internal constitution of this part of India shall be framed on modern democratic lines, with the fundamental rights embodied in the Indian Constitution Act, remaining undisturbed.

It will be a State for actively containing, through State policy and power, the halting and corroding influences or ideologies that stalk this sacred land of India in the guise of socialism and communism and which are a deadly prelude to atheism and materialism

that cannot but degrade the human character and debase the human soul.

The immediate establishment of such a Sikh homeland is in the best interests of integrated India and a united Indian nation and is the need of the hour.

Q: Would such a State be not repugnant to the letter and spirit of secularism of the Indian Constitution ?

A: I have a two-fold answer to the question. First, the Constitution of India, 1950, and its basis, though legally binding on the Sikh people as citizens of India, are not so morally. It is a well-known story that the Indian National Congress had made solemn commitments to the Sikh people that the constitution would be framed with their express approval.

These commitments are documented and authenticated to which I had made a detailed reference in my opening speech in the Lok Sabha on the Punjab Reorganization Bill, 1966.

The facts as stated by me were not denied by the Government. When this Constitution had come up for final approval before the Constituent Assembly in 1950, the two Akali representatives—Mr. Hukum Singh (the present Governor of Rajasthan) and Mr. Bhupinder Singh Mann—had gone on record in declaring: “The Sikhs do not accept this Constitution. The Sikhs reject this Constitution.”

This is, I think, a most conclusive answer to your question.

My second answer is provided by the famous words of Thomas Jafferson (1743—1826): “No society can make a perpetual constitution or even a perpetual law.”

PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

Q: What areas according to you would form the proposed Sikh homeland ?

A: This is a big and complicated question. Sir Needham Cust in his *Oriental and Linguistic Essays* has demarcated the area of Sikh homeland as the tableland confined by the rivers Yamuna and Jhelum.

In 1843, when the Kabul King, Dost Mohd Khan, pleaded with the Sarkar Khalsa to withdraw the claim of sovereignty of the Sikhs on Peshawar and the area to the west of it, in return for a fixed tribute, on the ground that Peshawar was a matter of honour for the Pathans, the reply of the vice-regent, Kanwar Naunihal Singh, on behalf of the Sarkar Khalsa, was to the effect that the historical Sikh lands lay between the Yamuna and the river beyond Ghazni and that the recovery of these Sikh lands was equally a matter of honour for the Sarkar Khalsa.

DAL RESOLUTION

On July 20, 1966, the Akali Dal (Master Group) passed a resolution formally demanding establishment of a Sikh homeland by stating that "first the Sikh areas deliberately not included in the new Punjab to be set up, namely, the establishments of Bhakra and Nangal, the areas of Gurdaspur District including Dalhousie, Ambala District including Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Sadar, the entire Una tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, Desh area of Nalagarh, the tehsil of Sirsa and sub-tehsil Tohana and Ratia Block of Hissar District, Guhla Sub-Tehsil and Shahbad Block of Karnal District and the contiguous portions of Ganganagar District of Rajasthan must now be immediately included in the new proposed Punjab so as to bring all these contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit to be the Sikh homeland within the Union of India.

"Secondly, such a new State of Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status similar to the one granted to the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the Constitution Act of India as it stood framed in 1950."

HINDU FEARS

Q: The Hindus have a lot of apprehensions about your point of view. Do you propose to allay their fears ?

A: There are two categories of people who are allergic to my way of thinking—those who have malice and prejudice against the Sikhs ; and those who oppose my demand because of ignorance.

Towards the first type, our attitude is that of militant hostility. Where there is opposition, on account of ignorance and misunderstanding, we have nothing but a keen and humble desire to be permitted to explain ourselves. I had discussed, between 1930 and 1963, my views with personalities like Bhai Parmanand, Veer Savarkar, Dr Moonje, Gandhiji and Mr Golwalkar and I had won their admiration.

I am all for Hindu-Sikh unity, but I cannot support such amity if as a result of it the Sikhs are to lose their independent identity.

Q: You had played a key role in bringing about the merger of the two rival Akali Dals in October last, Are you satisfied with the results produced by this unity ?

A: I am extremely unhappy with the political policies of the Akali leaders. I pray to God that if I have received adequate punishment for the sin committed by me in working for the integration of the two Akali Dals, I may be delivered of this Akali Dal or he should create conditions in which regular procedures, logic and a fair functioning should replace arbitrariness and lawlessness.

SEPARATE HOMELAND FOR THE SIKHS

Kapur Singh

CHANDIGARH: The demand for a separate homeland for the Sikhs is once again being raised in the Punjab.

SARDAR KAPUR SINGH, Senior Vice-President of the Akali Dal, is the man who has raised this separatist demand. He had done so earlier during the mid-term poll. He is doing it now again when the Akali Dal is in power in Punjab.

Akali Dal's president, **Sant Fateh Singh** is opposed to the separate homeland demand. His disagreement with Sardar Kapur Singh (who once belonged to the **Master Tara Singh** group) on many other political issues is also well-known.

Such a situation is likely to threaten the unity of the Akali Dal which today rules Punjab with **Jana Sangh's** help.

Whether the Akali Dal will contemplate taking disciplinary action against Sardar Kapur Singh will depend on the inner political stresses and pulls of the Akali Dal.

Till October last year there were two Akali Dals in the State. The Sant Akali Dal led by Sant Fateh Singh and the Master Akali Dal, led by **Master Tara Singh**.

The death of Master Tara Singh united the two Akali Dals, making them the single biggest political force in the State.

On the eve of the mid term poll, the Master group in the Akali Dal revived the demand for a separate Sikh homeland. At that time Sant Fateh Singh and his

followers did not oppose the move but in fact encouraged it.

Sardar Kapur Singh, who is now identified as the chief protagonist of the Sikh homeland demand, bases his case on the merger agreement which was reached between the two Akali Dals last year.

"Secret Clause"

According to him there was some "secret clause" in the agreement that the demand for a Sikh homeland would remain the main political aim of the Akali Dal.

Chief Minister **SARDAR GURNAM SINGH** denies the existence of any such "secret clause" in the merger agreement.

This new development in the Akali politics has put their allies in Government on the alert. For example the Jana Sangh has demanded repudiation of the homeland demand from the Akali leadership and action against Sardar Kapur Singh for voicing such an "Anti national, undemocratic and unconstitutional demand which would destroy the Hindu-Sikh unity."

What Sardar Kapur Singh is actually upto in Punjab, is an important question now being asked in the State's political circles.

Is he aspiring to become another **Jinnah** who had more than two decades ago claimed a separate homeland for the Muslims ?

Or, is he trying to imitate the RSS chief, **Golwalkar** who has for ever been demanding a "Hindu Rashtra" ?

CURRENT interviews Kapur Singh

Last week this correspondent called on this controversial personality of Punjab, Sardar Kapur Singh and questioned him on the new turn the Akali politics has taken in recent months.

CURRENT: What were the salient features of the

merger agreement that brought the two wings of the Akali Dal together ?

KAPUR SINGH: The Shiromani Akali Dal is one of the oldest political parties of India, almost half a century old. It was in the year 1963 that Sant Fateh Singh set up a rival Akali Dal, which was unconstitutional but this 'irregular' Akali Dal caught the imagination of the Sikh peasants, though it diametrically deviated from the fundamental principles and objectives of the old constitutional Akali Dal. The Government of India took a lively interest in this whole affair. The new Akali Dal was blemished with two afflictions:

(1) It sought to replace the constitutional continuity of the Shiromani Akali Dal with arbitrariness; and

(2) It tended to abandon the entire basis of the Akali Dal, which is politics grounded in the postulates of religion as propounded by the Sikh Gurus.

Therefore, in the Merger Document, which was signed by the representatives of both the Dals, these errors were corrected. This document declares that there is and has been throughout the past half a century and upto date, only one Shiromani Akali Dal. This document also concedes that it is the birthright of the Sikh people to claim and establish a sovereign political status for themselves, which has a constitutionally recognised territorial basis within the Union of India. This is precisely the essence of the demand for the Sikh homeland, which has three main constituents :

(a) There should be a territorial area demarcated, consisting of the present Punjab and certain other areas, which are contiguous and Punjabi speaking.

(b) This area should be given internal autonomy and the right to frame its constitution on the pattern of the rights conceded to the State of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370, of the Indian Constitution.

(c) The Constitution of India should concede that, in this area, the interests of Sikhism are of special importance, so that in the constitution of the Sikh homeland, a provision can be incorporated for the preservation of Sikhism and for keeping away such harmful ideologies as of Communism.

CURRENT: What is the basis of rumours in the national press that you are likely to be expelled from the Shiromani Akali Dal ?

KAPUR SINGH: In my own humble way I have always tried to bring out and elucidate that exact nature of the demand for the Sikh homeland as it logically and inevitably emerges out of the political objectives accepted in the Merger Document, but the very mention of the word 'Sikh homeland' seems to cause irritation not only to Sant Fateh Singh personally but to his allies, the Jana Sangh and the Communists also.

Sant gave me a solemn undertaking.

Sant Fateh Singh insists that I must stop talking about the 'Sikh homeland' altogether in spite of the fact that before the unity of the rival Dals, Sant Fateh Singh had given me a solemn undertaking that when both the Dals are united, he will sever all connection with the Jana Sangh as well as the Communists and that, in future, only true political objectives and programmes of the Shiromani Akali Dal will be followed.

Whenever, I remind him of these promises and insist on remaining loyal to the letter and spirit of the political objectives of the Sikhs, agreed to by the rival Dals in the Merger Document, Sant Fateh Singh and his supporters in the Akali Dal, most of whom are wholly innocent of any modern education or training in modern politics, literally fly at my throat for defying the sacred authority of divine origin with which Sant Fateh Singh, in their eyes, is invested.

They threaten to expel me from the Dal unless I agree to submit to the two following requirements:

- (a) Abjure all faith in and talk of, the true political objectives of the Shiromani Akali Dal;
- (b) Accept Sant Fateh Singh as an infallible authority on all matters relating to Sikh politics and the organisational matters of the Dal.

Both these requirements are preposterous, on the face of it, to which no modern educated person, with any self respect, can submit. Again, the existing Akali Dal organisation by the Merger document, consists only of two ad hoc committees, that is, the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Committee, and there is no General House now left.

The idea was to set up ad hoc organs for fighting the mid-term elections and for making proper arrangements for denovo enrolment of primary membership with a view to set up a proper Shiromani Akali Dal through a democratic procedure.

These ad hoc committees cannot assume the powers of either expelling their own members or of adding any new member. This is stated specifically in the Merger Document itself, that the terms agreed to in the document are "final and unalterable ("Katai and akhandaniya").

But since the Akali Dal of Sant Fateh Singh functions as a fascist and totalitarian body packed with "Jathedars", who have no notion of what is proper and constitutional, I neither expect a hearing nor understanding from these quarters. But it is certain that I will not submit to a position which is degrading to my self-respect or which is wholly harmful to the interests of the Sikh people.

It seems more than likely that Sant Fateh Singh and his followers will proceed on their path of arbitrariness. The only consequence of such a development can be that the merger of the two rival Akali Dals

will stand repudiated and either the old and original Akali Dal will have to be revived again, to carry out the true programme of the sikh People or the Sikh people will pass into political oblivion.

CURRENT: After the attainment of a unilingual Punjabi Suba, what is the constitutional justification for your demand for a Sikh homeland ?

KAPUR SINGH: I am afraid the question, as you put it, is not very precise. If you imply that the demand cannot be made within the framework of the Indian Constitution, you are not right.

If you want to know what political justification the Sikhs have for making this demand, then I would like to recall the speech I made in the Lok Sabha in November, 1966 when the Punjab Reorganisation Bill came up for discussion.

In that speech, I gave the history of the commitment which the All India Congress Committee and its leaders had repeatedly made to the Sikhs ever since 1926. The commitment was to give adequate protection and safeguards to the religious aspirations of the Sikhs and for the preservation of the Sikh way of life within the Indian Union.

It was implicit in these undertakings that an area in the north of India would be carved, wherein the above mentioned requirements were to find a concrete political expression. This is precisely the substance of the demand for a Sikh homeland.

When, however, the constitution was sought to be imposed by a majority vote, the Akali Dal representatives in the Constituent Assembly, which included **Sardar Hukam Singh**, former Speaker of the Lok Sabha and now the Governor of Rajasthan, recorded their protest in the following words: "The Sikhs do not accept this Constitution. The Sikhs reject this Constitution."

Not morally binding on Sikhs

In this background, it cannot be claimed that the present Constitution of India is morally binding on the Sikhs, though they can repudiate it only at their own peril because the power has been usurped by the majority community through an act of betrayal of faith.

Secondly, as Thomas Jefferson (1743—1826) said: "No society can make a perpetual Constitution or even a perpetual law". It is a strange game, first to trick the Sikh people into trusting the word of the Hindu leaders and then, through a cynical breach of faith, imposing a constitution on them which contains the seeds of such trends which would push the Sikhs outside the mainstream of Indian history and which is designed to destroy the Khalsa and the Sikh way of life. Through such a game, you cannot hope to achieve a well-knit and integrated nation.

CURRENT: Will the Sikh homeland of your conception not be a theocratic State exactly on the pattern of Pakistan ?

KAPUR SINGH: The Sikh Homeland, within the Indian Union, would neither be a theocratic State where the Constitution is framed on God given laws, nor would it be a State with two categories of citizens, superior and inferior, as are recognised in the Islamic polity.

Sikhism sets up no exclusive society and recognises no secular laws of divine origin. The Sikhs cannot create a theocratic State, even if they wanted. If they could, they would have done it in the first half of the 19th century when they had the power to do so.

Secondly, the constitution to be framed by the Sikh homeland will be through a democratic process just as the Constitution of India was framed. Its comparison with Pakistan is either wholly misconceived or mischievous.

The Sikh society is essentially a Hindu society from which all regulative compulsions of the caste system are eliminated. The only difference between the Sikh homeland and the rest of India will be that in the Sikh homeland there will be constitutional guarantees to protect the values of Dharma and safeguard the interests of Sikhism so that they cannot be eroded into through an ideology like Communism.

Self Preservation

Such a contingency inimical to Dharma and the Sikh religion today cannot be said to be mere imagination, for, one cannot ignore the recent developments in West Bengal and Kerala, even if one has not properly understood the trends generated at Delhi by the Nehruites.

Let it be clear, the Sikhs are fighting for their self-preservation. The Sikhs are fighting for the upkeep of Dharma. The Sikhs want to live as all living things do and they do not want to die. This is the crux of the matter.

CURRENT: How much support you think you have for your ideas ?

KAPUR SINGH: Well, if you must know and the fact can be verified from the reports regularly submitted to my friend, **Sardar Gurnam Singh**, the Chief Minister, by the State's political intelligence department, there is not a day of the week, save postal holidays, when I do not receive approximately a dozen letters from the Sikhs in every corner of India.

All these letters contain the theme, namely, that what I say on the subject of Sikh homeland is the quintessence of their own aspirations.

Such communications are received from as far as the United Kingdom, Canada, Malaysia and Africa as well. Almost the entire Sikh Youth, the entire Sikh intelligentsia and the entire politically educated sector of the Sikhs, most of the urban populations, are solidly behind this demand.

It is the Sikhs tied down to the Gurdwaras—the property based temples, **the Sikhs grossly ignorant and ill-informed and the Sikhs who do not see beyond their own noses and do not feel beyond their bellies, who are vocally against me and have even threatened to destroy me physically.**

This is the only answer to the question you have put.

**Main Resolution passed at the open session of the
General Hari Singh Nalwa Conference held at
Ludhiana on 4th July, 1965.**

This Conference in Commemoration of General Hari Singh Nalwa of historical fame reminds all concerned that the Sikh People are makers of history and are conscious of their political destiny in a free India.

2. This Conference recalls that the Sikh people agreed to merge in a Common Indian Nationality on the explicit understanding of being accorded a constitutional status of co-sharers in the Indian sovereignty along with the majority community, which solemn understanding now stands cynically repudiated by the present rulers of India. Further, the Sikh People have been systematically reduced to a sub-political status in their home-land, the Punjab, and to an insignificant position, in their mother-land, India. The Sikhs are in position to establish before an impartial International Tribunal, uninfluenced by the present Indian rulers that the law, the judicial process, and the executive action of the Status of India is consistently and heavily weighed against the Sikhs and is administered with unbandaged eyes against Sikh Citizens.

3. This Conference, therefore, resolves, after thought that there is left no alternative for the Sikhs in the interest of self preservation but to frame their political demand for securing a self determined political status within the Republic of Union of India.

Moved by : Sardar Gurnam Singh, Bar-at-law,
Judge High Court (Retd.)

M. L. A. (Punjab), Leader of the Opposition, of
Chandigarh.

Seconded by : Giani Bhupinder Singh, President,
Shiromani Akali Dal, Ex-Head priest, Golden
Temple, Amritsar.

RESOLUTION No. 1

Passed at the emergent Meeting of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal, held at New Delhi on 20th July, 1966.

This emergent meeting of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal,

AFTER HAVING CAREFULLY VIEWED THE findings, the reports and judgments of judicial and quasi-judicial Tribunals and Forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests,

COMES TO THE CONCLUSION, that the entire judicial machinery and the judicial process of the independent India, under influences of a certain section of political Hindus, is prejudiced and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights. Therefore, this meeting, on behalf of the Sikh people,

CALLS UPON THE WORLD OPINION in general, and forums and organisations of international and Commonwealth Jurists, to set up appropriate machinery to go into and report upon the subtle and persistent denial of fundamental human rights to the Sikh people in a free and independent India.

ATTESTED:

(AJMER SINGH)

**SECRETARY,
Shiromani Akali Dal, Amritsar,**

Press statement made by Sirdar Kapur Singh, (Ex-M.P.) M.L.A. (Punjab) on the 27th April, 1969 at Jullundur.

The demand for Sikh Homeland, within the Union of India, has three fold validity and sources. It is vested in the original doctrine of the Khalsa as laid down by **Guru** Gobind Singh himself which postulates that freedom of the human spirit fortified by political Sovereignty is the true desideratum of the Khalsa. "Khalsa mero Sah Kau Sahu" 'My Khalsa is Suigeneris Sovereign'. Since the Khalsa was founded in compliance with the Will of God (agia bhai Akal Ki tabhi Chalaio Panth), an unceasing endeavour to achieve and maintain its birthright of Sovereignty is the divine Commandment for the Khalsa, which might be disobeyed by the renegeds, neglected by the weaklings and compromised by the traitors, but which cannot be abrogated or annulled by mortals. All such powers or Organisations that seek so to do commit an act of War against the Khalsa.

2. Secondly, leaders of the Indian National Congress and the leaders of the Hindu Community, including the Hindu leaders of the Punjab, had ever since 1929 repeatedly given solemn undertakings to the Sikh people that after the British quit India, no Constitution will be framed except that the "Sikhs freely accept it and that in the North of India an area shall be politically demarcated wherein the Sikhs can breathe the air of freedom," that is, can realise their true Sovereign personality in a specified territory and within a constitutionally guaranteed framework. In my speech made in the Lok Sabha, while opening the debate on the Punjab Reorganisation

Bill 1966, on the 6th September, 1966, I listed such undertakings and promises in detail and stated how these promises were cynically broken when the Constitution of India was framed in 1950, and how the Sikhs representatives in the Constituent Assembly declared their unambiguous and categorical rejection of the Constitution imposed upon the Sikhs by brute majority, thus usurping all decision—making powers for the majority Community. Broken Pledges do not invalidate the contents and purport of the Pledges, and usurpation bestows no moral sanction for Suppression or extinction of legitimate rights.

3. Thirdly, the Fathers of Our Constitution have embedded Key Phrase in the very first Article of the Constitution Act, which indicates the true Personality and nature of the nation which the Constitution seeks to and must preserve. In the Article I it is stated that our country is, "India, that is Bharat". It is obvious that the Fathers of our Constitution did not seek to preserve merely a State and a people politically organised as a nation, but the endeavoured to revive and preserve certain fundamental and abiding Values that are inseparable from the concept of a geographical area and an ethnic and cultural group of historical antiquity. This India with frontiers such as history and Nature have given to it, and inhabited by a people who cherish and practice a way of life, according to norms and precept, called, *Dharma*. But eversince 1947, trends have been generated and policies promulgated that aim at destroying *Dharma* and substituting in its place an alien philosophy of life and rules of Conduct. A Secular State in the meaning of a State which is unconcerned about, if not actually hostile to *Dharma* is a state that is Ultravires of the Article I of our Constitution and a political climate that is openly inimical to the ancient moral foundations of our Society is an act of sabotage of our Constitution. The So-called Socialist Pattern of Society which has remai-

ned the Political Credo the ruling party, ever since the transfer of power in India and recognition of primacy of materialism as the base of all Spiritual and Cultural activities of man is Simple Crypto-Communism and is tantamount to flagrant violation of Key Article of our Constitution.

4. As it is, this devaluation of *Dharma* in India, that ought to have been forever Bharat, has hit the interests of the Sikhs the hardest. It has encouraged deliberate policies and programmes by the State-Powers in the country that specifically seek to disintegrate the Khalsa, debase the Sikh personality and debilitate the Sikh potential for making and influencing history. These policies and programmes are motivated by historical anti-Sikh proclivities of the Majority community to which a reference was made by Mr. D. Petrie, Assistant Director, Criminal Intelligence, Government of India, in his Secret Report (now, in the National Archives) to the Government of India, dated the 16th October, 1911. In para 6, of this document it is revealed that, "That activities of Hindus, have been constantly directed to the undermining of Sikhism, both by preventing the children of Sikh fathers from taking the Sikh baptism (Pahul) and seducing professed Sikhs from their allegiance to their faith." In India, after freedom, such activities have been intensified on State and Government level, in the Civil Services and Military Organisations, in the economic and cultural spheres, and now a stage has been reached that either the Sikhs must Vigorously safeguard their interests and existence through fundamental political arrangements or accept the gradual and ignominious death. The Sikhs want to live as all living things do and they do not want to die.

5. The demand for Sikh Homeland is justified because it has a Divine sanction behind it. It is justified because it embodies fundamental *suigeneris* rights of the Sikh people. It is justified because it is

based on solemn pledges and undertakings given to the Sikh people by the majority community who are now the repository of political power of the State. It is justified because it seeks to restore in a Corner of the Country, the essence of our Constitution enshrined in the Article I. It is justified on the ground of self preservation of the Sikh people. These justifications are collectively weightier than those urged in favour of freedom for India, in favour of Creation of Pakistan, in favour of setting up of Israel as a sovereign State. The demand for Sikh Homeland within the Union of India, is, therefore, morally unassailable and politically irresistible.

6. This demand for the Sikh Homeland has three ingredients. Firstly, it is demanded that all left out contiguous Sikh and Punjabi speaking area should be added to the present Punjab, including Bhakra, Nangal, Chandigarh and portions of Ganganagar of Rajasthan. Secondly, this amplified State, within the Indian Union, should be given the right to frame its own internal autonomous constitution, as was done in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, under the Article 370, as it stood in the year 1950. Thirdly, and lastly, it should be recognised and explicitly stipulated in our Constitution Act that this enlarged and autonomous State of Punjab, the interests of the Sikhs are of special importance, so as to make it Constitutional to include such directives and provisions of public policy in the internal Constitution of this State as deemed necessary or desirable for preserving the deposits of Sikhism and for safeguarding the Sikh Way of life.

7. The internal Constitution of this autonomous State shall be democratically framed, within the ambit of the Constitution Act of India, and it cannot create a theocracy or a non equalitarian, graded society wherein a Class of Citizens or Section of society are more privileged than the rest.

8. This demand for the Sikh Homeland is basi-

cally different from demands formulated by a splinter group of the Shiromani Akali Dal at their Conference at Batala in 1968. This group demanded :

1. Addition of certain left out Punjabi speaking areas to the present Punjab but these additions are less than those contemplated in the demand for Sikh Homeland.

2. It was further demanded by this group that more powers should be transferred from the Centre-List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution Act to its State-list. This is essentially a Communist demand, the purpose of which is to weaken the Centre so as to prepare ground for eventual take over of the Country by the Communists. The demand for internal autonomy in the Sikh Homeland is directed towards Strictly regulating the State powers for purposes of preserving the eternal Unity of India, that is Bharat, and for containing such trends and forces and ideologies that are inimical towards the integrity of India and a United Indian Nation.

3. Lastly, at Batala, it was Vaguely and ominously demanded that the Punjab State Government should be directed from Amritsar and not from Delhi. This may mean the cult of personality prevalent in this splinter group of the Akalis or it may mean subordination of the executive organs of the State to the dictates of Sikh priestly persons in control of Sikh temples. The demand for the Sikh Homeland eschews all personality cult and totalitarian trends and is totally opposed to directive influences of the priests and Sacerdotal persons in the politics. On the other hand, it aims at retaining Military power, foreign relations etc. in the hands of a strong Centre such as is capable of defending the integrity of India and Unity of the Nation. The demand for Sikh Homeland and the vague, incoherent demands formulated at Batala by a Section of the Akalis are poles apart and have nothing in Common with each other.



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3	14	Country	country
3	16	Strictly	strictly
3	18	Unity	unity
3	21	United	united
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3	32	Sacerdotal	sacerdotal
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3	34	Military	military
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3	39	Section	section
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